Carter appoints Calif.-based int'l company as EEMC. » PAGE 3

Muna: I beg the Legislature and governor to kill this bill. » PAGE 5

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE [illegible] DAILY NEWSPAPER

75¢

ABOARD THE POLAR EXPRESS
A young tourist plays with the North Pole Polar Express toy train inside the T Galleria yesterday. November 2014 visitor arrivals to the CNMI jumped 16 percent to 39,137 visitors in November 2014, compared to 33,678 visitors received in November 2013.
MARK RABAGO

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TRAGIC CHRISTMAS EVE

Motorcycle rider killed in crash

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A 21-year-old man was killed when he lost control of a black motorcycle he was riding and was thrown against a traffic sign pole along Isa Drive in San Vicente Wednesday afternoon, police said yesterday.

» 4th fatality of vehicular, motorcycle crash this year

Christopher Del Rosario suffered head injury, internal bleeding due to a ruptured spleen, and numerous contusions and lacerations.

Department of Public Safety police spokesman Travis Hurst said Dr. Stephen Katz of the Commonwealth Health Center pronounced Del Rosario dead Wednesday at 9:19pm as a result of head injury.

Del Rosario is the fourth fatality of a vehicular and motorcycle crash on

See RIDER on Page 4

CEC incurred $11,995 for Tinian recount

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Election Commission incurred $11,995 in expenses for the two-day recounting and accounting of votes in connection with the election challenge filed by incumbent Tinian and Aguiguan Mayor Ramon M. Dela Cruz over the victory of Joey Patrick San Nicolas in the Tinian mayoral race.

CEC executive director Robert Guerrero disclosed in an interview on Wednesday that the expenses do not include the attorney's fee of the Office of the Attorney General for the two-day recounting and accounting held at the Tinian Superior Court

See CEC on Page 4

Kilili: Chances slim he will be allowed to vote on Committee of the Whole

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

There is a zero to miniscule chance that delegates from U.S. territories as well as the resident commissioner of Puerto Rico will be allowed to vote in the Committee of the Whole of the U.S. House of Representatives when the 114th Congress convenes next month, according to Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP).

"I think there is a very small chance that the rules will be changed to allow the delegates and the resident commissioner from Puerto Rico to vote in the Committee of the Whole, when the 114th Congress convenes in January. Typically, this vote has only been allowed when the Democratic Party was in the majority in the House of Representatives; and the rule has been revoked when Republicans are in the majority, which will continue to be the case in the next Congress," said Sablan in an email to the *Saipan Tribune*.

» Delegates of Guam, A. Samoa, US Virgin Islands as well as resident commissioner of Puerto Rico in same boat

This comes on the heels of Rep. Ste-

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INSIDE

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With a reading level close to that of a college freshman, Mary Heather Jingco reads to "escape reality."
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A white police officer kills a black 18-year-old who police said pointed a gun at him.
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Sony's "The Interview" has a new role: a test for a new kind of movie release.
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Local

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Ongoing CUC projects to result in water service interruptions

By JAYSON CAMACHO
jayson_camacho@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Due to new water tank construction projects, customers of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. will be experiencing water services interruptions from time to time, according to CUC executive director Alan Fletcher.

"CUC wishes to remind customers of several ongoing capital improvement projects that may periodically interrupt normal water service. Such interruptions will continue throughout the construction period," he said.

The interruptions will include reduced water service hours, reduced pressure, and /or occasional shutdowns.

"We encourage customers to practice water conservation so that water service can be sustained at the highest level under these circumstances," Fletcher said.

CUC has several ongoing water tank projects for replacement in Puerto Rico and Papago.

The replacement of the Puerto Rico reservoir is being undertaken by the Water Task Force to address the critical need for continued reliable water storage in Puerto Rico and neighboring communities.

"CUC inspection revealed the failure of roof support rafters and other weaknesses in the tank that threatened catastrophic failure," he said.

Customers being served by the Puerto Rico tank will be experiencing interruptions in water services for the next six months. Areas include: Puerto Rico, lower Navy Hill, Lower Base, central Garapan (points south to the new True Value Hardware store), and possibly Tanapag, San Roque, and Marpi.

The replacement of the Papago reservoir is being done by CUC. Customers in the area will also experience water service interruptions in the next six months. Areas include: Papago, San Vicente, Katbon Drive, and possibly Dandan, As Lito, and Fina Sisu (if heavy demand in the Dandan tank service, area needs to be augmented by Papago).

"There are temporary tanks with limited storage serving in place of the Papago reservoir to mitigate water service interruptions while the permanent tank is constructed," Fletcher said.

Upcoming water tank projects

The Gualo Rai and San Vicente reservoirs will also be replaced in the near future.

Fletcher said the Gualo Rai reservoir has severe corrosion on the tanks shell, threatening its serviceability but temporary storage will be planned to provide limited water service to Gualo Rai community. Those that will be affected is only Gualo Rai.

For the San Vicente replacement on its reservoir, CUC engineers and tank inspection consultant determined that the tank should be replaced as soon as funding is available. Until the tank is replaced, the water level in the tank has been reduced to ensure tank safety. Due to the lower level, water service hours may be reduced periodically and service pressures will be lower.

Those that will be affected include San Vicente, Naftan, and Obyan.

"CUC encourages all customers in the affected communities to conserve water and those that have water tanks and cisterns to take steps to make sure that their on-site equipment is fully functional and sanitary. CUC will announce when the new tanks are completed and in service such that reliance on on-site storage and pressure systems can terminate," Fletcher said.

For more information or inquiries call CUC's water division at 322-5030/31 or the Call Center at 664-4282.

FROM OCT 2011 TO NOV 2014

USCIS has approved petitions for 16,627 CW workers

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has so far approved the petitions of 16,627 CW workers from Oct. 7, 2011, to Nov. 30, 2014, according to USCIS Supervisory Public Affairs Officer, West Coast, Marie Thérèse Sebrechts.

She said the CNMI report is updated each month and the particular report she is sharing with the *Saipan Tribune* contains all CNMI activity from Oct. 7, 2011, through Nov. 30, 2014.

Sebrechts said there are two types of extensions contained in the report—with the same employer and with a different employer.

I129CW Extension with the same employer petitions during the four-year period contained in the report saw a total of 10,220 petitions filed by approximately 1,694 different employers.

Of the petitions, a total of 17,008 CW1 workers are sponsored and of the number 8,951 petitions were approved consisting of 14,497 beneficiaries.

The USCIS officials, meanwhile, said a total of 183 petitions were denied consisting of 282 beneficiaries.

Sebrechts said a petition is the application filed, while beneficiaries are those persons—in this case, workers—who are named in the petition.

USCIS, meanwhile, had data entered 2,188 I-129CW petitions with a different employer from Oct. 7, 2011 through Nov. 30, 2014.

Sebrechts said the petitions were filed by approximately 798 different employers and that a total of 3,036 CW1 workers are sponsored on these petitions.

Of the number, 1,642 petitions were approved consisting of 2,130 beneficiaries. Meanwhile, 277 petitions were denied made up of 486 beneficiaries.

The CNMI-only Transitional Worker Program was instituted after the Consolidated Natural Resources Act was signed into law in 2009. The CNRA extended U.S. immigration to the CNMI and brought forth the five-year transitional CW program that was subsequently was extended to 2019 by U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas E. Perez in June 3, 2014.

TO EXPEDITIOUSLY COMPLETE SOME STALLED CUC PROJECTS

Carter appoints Calif.-based int'l company as EEMC

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge David O. Carter has selected Gilbane Federal, a California-based full service construction company with 64 offices worldwide, as an Engineering and Environmental Management Company, which will have the power to expeditiously complete some stalled Commonwealth Utilities Corp. projects.

In an order on Tuesday, Carter said after consideration of the candidates' proposals and interviews, in light of the scope and nature of stipulated order 2 (SO2), and upon full consideration of the history of this case, he appoints as EEMC Gilbane Federal, a full service construction, environmental, fuels, and energy company.

SO2 refers to court-mandated CUC projects that include the CUC pipeline; tank erection cleanout and testing; secondary containment; and used oil disposal, and others.

Carter said Gilbane Federal, acting by and through its vice president of fuels business line, Daryl Greenway, is appointed as the EEMC pursuant to the court's Sept. 26, 2014 order, and is vested with all the power and authority outlined in that order.

According to Gilbane Federal's website, Greenway has served as project or program manager for multiple U.S. Department of Defense projects in Iraq, Afghanistan, Diego Garcia, Johnston Atoll, Bahamas, Guam, Korea, Turkey, Germany, Italy, Spain, Japan, and U.S.A.

Carter said upon consultation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and CUC, consistent with the EEMC order and Gilbane's proposal, as of Dec. 23, 2014, Gilbane Federal is authorized to proceed with work on the CUC pipeline and Tank 102 projects.

"Gilbane, EPA, and CUC will consult regarding final terms of the engagement, consistent with the EEMC order and Gilbane's proposal, to submit for the court's consideration and approval by Jan. 14, 2015," the judge said.

It was reported last month that Gilbane Federal has been selected by the U.S. Department of Defense to design/build a $166-million construction project at King Khalid Air Base for the Royal Saudi Force in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The project reportedly represents a joint effort by the U.S. Air Force and the Royal Saudi Air Force to provide the facilities necessary to support the modernization of the F-15SA aircraft at King Khalid Airbase.

CUC and EPA are in disagreement over EPA's role over the implementation of identified CUC projects with the selection of the EEMC.

CUC, through counsel James S. Sirok, has filed a motion, requesting the court to clarify the court's order as they relate to the management responsibilities of the EEMC over the various projects directed and mandated by SO2.

Sirok raised the question before the court whether the EEMC order is to be construed to mean that the EEMC is responsible for the implementation and management of all EPA identified 13 SO2 projects during the term of its contract.

Sirok said under the provisions of the EEMC order, CUC believes that the EPA does not have the authority to micromanage the SO2 projects and SO2 project management responsibilities of the EEMC.

In EPA's response, U.S. Department of Justice Environmental Enforcement Section senior attorney Bradley R. O'Brien said CUC's position that EPA does not have the authority to direct whether the EEMC, CUC, or EPA will implement SO2 projects is incorrect.

O'Brien said CUC's self-described "13 SO2 projects" are not part of the EEMC order but are among the projects required under SO2, which the EEMC order expressly did not modify, preclude, or impact.

O'Brien said the EEMC order provides EPA general authority to prioritize projects, select the entity to implement the project, and oversee the work.

O'Brien said it appears that CUC is attempting to leverage the EEMC order to resolve CUC's numerous contracting issues relating to its failures to implement SO2 projects.

Last September, Carter approved a settlement agreement entered by EPA, CUC, and the CNMI government that will require the CNMI government to, among other things, deposit over $22.8 million until 2018 to complete some stalled CUC projects.

The order gave parties 45 days to submit proposed potential EEMCs for court approval. The judge extended the deadline by an additional 23 days upon the parties' request.

The appointment of EEMC shall be for five years, unless terminated earlier with the court's approval.

From 15 interested candidates for EEMC position, EPA narrowed this down to three firms that were provided for the court's consideration.

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NMC ranking system to be established

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College Board of Regents has approved a policy allowing for faculty ranking. That enables a "competitive process" for faculty to move through faculty ranking consistent with faculty spread and budget, according to director of human resources Christopher Timmons who spoke to the board on Monday.

NMC president Dr. Sharon Hart described the rankings as "common to the higher ed[ucation] industry." It would account for the budget available for faculty rankings every fiscal year.

The board amended and adopted policy 5011 during their meeting. They read as follows: "It is the policy of the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents that the College will acknowledge academic achievement, teaching excellence, and scholarly prominence of its faculty by granting faculty rank;"

And: "No tenure is granted and no expectation of continued or long-term employment shall be created by virtue of its adoption."

Rankings would not apply to adjunct faculty; they will retain the title of "instructor."

Administrators and college deans can apply for rank.

Timmons told the board that the rankings could be "something to fall back on when we get push back to exceed" faculty percentages.

In an interview, he said the rankings would be an "internal procedure," set by the college and not the board. He said that right now they have a framework they will send back to the faculty senate with literal "fill in the blank" percentages to be set.

He explained these percentages set a framework for the availability of promotions.

He said with this procedure, an associate professor seeking to be full professor would present a portfolio to be reviewed by a committee. He said points could be generated for work in the community, research, publications, or through students' evaluations, for example.

This "allows for competition," he said. He indicated that a committee would review these portfolios when promotions are sought for and are available.

With the policy, the president of the college "shall announce the maximum number of promotions that will be granted based upon allocated funding" at the start of the fiscal year.

Full-time professors are not to exceed 20 percent of full-time faculty.

Percentages for associate and assistant professors have not been set yet, but their ranked faculty "shall not collectively exceed 40 percent" of full-time faculty, it was learned.

SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT KHS AYUYU BATTALION

A total of 47 JROTC cadets from Kagman High School's Ayuyu Battalion conducted their service learning project by visiting the *Man'amko* Center on Thursday, Dec. 18. The cadets performed their 13th annual Christmas show at the Aging Center to spread happiness and joy to the senior citizens. The performance included the Exhibition Fancy Drill Team unarmed, the Rifle Drill Team, Christmas caroling, and distribution of handmade Christmas cards. The *man'amko* were thrilled with the KHS JROTC entertainment for the holidays.

IN SUPPORT OF MARINES' RELOCATION TO GUAM

Public comments accepted until Jan. 2 for PA memo

PEARL HARBOR--Naval Facilities Engineering Command Pacific issued yesterday a reminder that the 45-day public comment period, for new information associated with a proposed project from the Harmon Substation to Andersen Air Force Base Main Station within Existing Easements, Routes 3, 3A and 9 Right of Ways, in support of the Marine Corps Realignment continues through Friday, Jan. 2, 2015 Chamorro Standard Time.

Comments are being accepted for the Department of Defense's identification and evaluation of historic properties and its determination of effect for P-102 Harmon Power Upgrade Programmatic Agreement Memo 1.

This project proposes construction and associated efforts for the Harmon Power Upgrade between the existing Harmon Substation located near the intersection of Routes 1 and 3 to the main station at AAFB, primarily within existing easements and right of ways along Routes 3, 3A and 9.

The information can be found on the NAVFAC Pacific Cultural Information website at http://go.usa.gov/kZWG. (Please note the URL is case sensitive). Comments may be submitted via email to criwebcomment@navy.mil.

Those without internet access can obtain a hard copy of the PA Memos from the Guam Historic Resources Division, located at 490 Chalan Palasyo, Agana Heights, 96910 (in the Department of Parks and Recreation Office). ***(USN)***

CEC

From Page 1

last Dec. 1 and 3.

Chief Prosecutor Brian Flaherty served as the lead counsel for CEC in the lawsuit.

Guerrero said under the law, Mayor Dela Cruz has to pay the expenses, but CEC and the government have to submit a petition for payment in court.

He said all seven CEC commissioners, including chair Frances M. Sablan, attended the recounting and accounting.

Guerrero said six CEC staff along with some personnel from the Department of Finance attended the proceedings as they were also subpoenaed to testify.

He added that technical people for the tabulation machines were present for the recounting.

The executive director said the Department of Public Safety likewise sent boats to Tinian for a security team.

He said a security team from Saipan was provided because there were rumors then that there might be problems during the recounting of votes.

Guerrero said DPS incurred fuel costs for the boats and personnel costs.

He said the expenses were for per diem allowance of CEC commissioners and staff, airfare, hotel and food expenses, rent a car, and shipping costs of the ballots.

Last Dec. 11, Superior Court Presiding Judge Robert C. Naraja issued an order dismissing Dela Cruz's election challenge.

Naraja ruled that in light of the evidence obtained at the recount, Dela Cruz's remaining claims do not satisfy the actual prejudice requirement and the complaint must be dismissed.

Naraja said Dela Cruz's remaining claims only challenge seven votes in total and even if these seven votes were determined to be invalid, it would not be enough to overcome San Nicolas' nine vote lead after the recount.

At the court-ordered recounting of votes at Tinian Superior Court last Dec. 1, San Nicolas still prevailed over Dela Cruz, this time by nine votes, 705-696.

San Nicolas of the Republican Party won by seven votes, 703-696, over Dela Cruz (Independent) during the first counting of votes. CEC has already certified the initial result.

In his lawsuit, Dela Cruz alleged several irregularities during the Nov. 4 election, including a discrepancy between the votes cast for Tinian mayor tabulated on Tinian and the tabulation on Saipan of the votes physically cast on Tinian for Tinian mayor. He also alleged that seven votes were cast by voters serving sentences for a felonies.

The first stage of the recount was conducted last Dec. 1 on Tinian. The recount showed that Dela Cruz garnered 696 votes, San Nicolas got 705, while David Cing received 47.

The second part of the recount, which was held last Dec. 3, CEC recounted and inventories the total number of ballots used during the election. CEC commissioners also accounted for and performed a reconciliation of the absentee voter registration procedures.

Following the second part of the recount, CEC and San Nicolas renewed their motions to dismiss, arguing that Dela Cruz's remaining claims were either resolved by the recount or failed to satisfy the actual prejudice requirement under the statute.

In his order, Naraja said Dela Cruz failed to challenge seven felony voters prior to election day and now seeks to challenge them after the time allotted by statute.

Naraja said the Legislature specifically provided a detailed rubric in which to bring a challenge, and Dela Cruz failed to follow such procedure.

KILILI

From Page 1

ny H. Hoyer (D-MD) penning a Dec. 19, 2014, letter to Rep. Pete Sessions (R-TX), House Committee on Rules chairman, to urge the rest of the House Republican leadership to recommend extending voting privileges to nonvoting delegates from the CNMI, Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the resident commissioner of Puerto Rico in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union when the House considers its rules package for the 114tn Congress.

Hoyer, the Democratic Whip, argued that since House delegates and the resident commissioner have had the right to vote in House committees since 1971, there is no reason they shouldn't also have the right to cast votes in the Committee of the Whole.

"House delegates and the resident commissioner are elected by the American citizens they represent, just as all House members are, and collectively represent almost 5 million Americans," he said. "Furnishing delegates and the resident commissioner the opportunity to express, for the record, their positions on issues of significance that are before the Committee of the Whole strengthens the ability of the electorates in the District of Columbia and the U.S. territories and possessions to hold their representatives to account at election time."

According to a report from the www.examiner.com, the practice of allowing territorial delegates and the resident commissioner of Puerto Rico to vote in Committee of the Whole sessions began Jan. 4, 1993, following a shift in party control of the House. The Republicans were unhappy with giving delegates any kind of vote, even a limited vote was too much to accept so they filed suit.

Minority Leader Robert Michel (R-IL) filed suit in the U.S. District Court of the District of Columbia to try and stop the delegates getting a committee vote. The Republicans lost the case *Michel vs. Anderson* and appealed to the District of Columbia U.S. Court of Appeals.

The federal appellate court upheld the lower ruling and the matter has remained a partisan dispute leading to new rules for the 112th Congress stripping the territories of the limited committee vote. It carried on to the 113th Congress and it seems in the 114th Congress as well.

RIDER

From Page 1

Saipan and in the CNMI this year.

Hurst said DPS Central Dispatch sent units to a motorcycle crash incident on Isa Drive Wednesday at 5:19pm. Upon arriving, police officers saw the victim lying next to a traffic sign pole and a black motorcycle north from him.

The victim, who was later identified as Del Rosario, was taken to CHC, where he later succumbed to his injuries.

Hurst said that, according to the investigation conducted by traffic officers, it was determined that Del Rosario lost control of the motorcycle and was thrown from the vehicle.

"This crash is currently under investigation," Hurst said.

Last July 6, Arthur Sibetang, 61, was killed when a pickup truck he was driving reportedly ran off the roadway and slammed into a concrete barrier for a power pole along Flame Tree Road in Dandan. Investigators determined that alcohol was a factor to the crash.

Last June 22, a woman and her unborn five-month-old baby were killed while three other occupants of a Toyota Sienna van were injured when the van they were riding crashed into a power pole along As Perdido Road. Investigators determined that speed was the cause of the crash and the driver was arrested and charged.

Muna: I beg the Legislature and governor to kill this bill

By JAYSON CAMACHO
jayson_camacho@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. is not too pleased with Tuesday's passage in the Senate of a bill that would change the corporation's advisory board into a governing board.

Senate Bill 18-52 was passed during a Senate session held on Dec. 23. According to CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muna, CHCC was not informed that the bill would be up for discussion in the session.

SB 18-52 seeks to amend certain sections of Public Law 16-51 in order to make the CHCC's advisory board a governing one, with powers to hire and fire the CEO.

The bill states that "in order to develop high quality and efficient healthcare system in the CNMI, it is imperative that a qualified group of individuals, rather than one individual, make the decisions of the corporation. Accordingly, the purpose of this legislation is to amend certain provisions of PL 16-51 to allow for a smooth transition from the department to the new healthcare corporation."

It adds "It is the purpose of this Act is to empower the board of trustees to make policies and perform all acts necessary and expedient to ensure the delivery of quality care in a financially responsible manner for the people of the Commonwealth."

Upon hearing the news, Muna lamented the Senate's action without informing CHCC or hearing CHCC's side at all.

"I am shocked that the Senate passed this bill anyway without considering or understanding the challenges CHCC faced when the advisory board was confused in their role of being "governing." We saw their actions in the past that almost led to the immediate termination of the Commonwealth Health Center's hospital certification back in 2011 and placing our patients in immediate jeopardy of injury and death when they were 'governing,'" Muna said.

"Their actions earlier this year that placed CHC in further risk forced the Attorney General's Office to remind them of their advisory role because of their statements made such as 'I don't care what the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Service says' and disregarding a credentialing process that raised the standards of care," she added.

"Obviously quality and safety was not a concern as one of them hinted we credentialed a staff anyway and in a few days he would make a mistake. We should regard a life much more than that."

Muna said that CHCC is not against the Senate's action toward changing the board into a governing one but the corporation may have a problem with the current members of the board.

"If this becomes law, it would be difficult to work with the current members with proven disregard of the CMS regulations and in improving quality of care for our people. CMS is satisfied with the current structure of the governing body of the hospital and the only reason it was cited in the last survey was because there were conditions in the other areas," she said.

If the bill becomes law, "this inexperienced board" will be deciding how the hospital should be staffed and run and can remove any quality checks they feel like it because of political pressure and because of their ego, especially since the voting rights of the CEO and the medical director is removed, according to Muna.

"I beg the Legislature and the governor to kill this bill as it removes the standard and quality our people deserve. CHC has come a long way and at the last survey and the last letter we received from CMS, they clearly are appreciative of leadership and our progress. Don't just read the letter that there are issues… look at the heart of that letter and you'll see that we should be proud of where we're going," Muna said.

CHCC board chair Jack Torres declined to comment yesterday, saying he has no knowledge of the bill itself being passed and if there were any changes. Other board members were also sought for comments but they did not respond to queries as of press time.

Navy training on Farallon de Medinilla

ASAN, Guam--The U.S. Navy will conduct training at the island of Farallon de Medinilla on Dec. 29-30 from 4:30pm to 9:30pm. The general public, especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators are advised to stay clear from the area during the date and time indicated. The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla will be on a 10-nautical mile radius on all quadrants.

Farallon de Medinilla plays a special and unique role in national defense because its location provides frequent access that supports training requirements. In addition, the air and sea space in the Farallon provides sufficient room for the many different attack profiles necessary to replicate training opportunities for aircraft in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. ***(PR)***

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Salas search and rescue team recognized by Senate

The search and rescue team that successfully found former Saipan Little League president Joseph "Joe" Salas after he went missing for almost a week following a hunting trip in Idaho is being recognized by a Senate resolution.

Senate Resolution 18-44, introduced by Senate President Ralph DLG. Torres (R-Saipan), passed the upper chamber by acclimation on Monday and it seeks "to recognize and commend the search and rescue team members for their determined and courageous efforts in assisting to rescue our brother and good friend Joe Sablan Salas after being missing from a hunting trip for six (6) days in the wilderness of Idaho."

It read that on Oct. 11, 2014, the Idaho County Sheriff's Office was advised of an overdue hunter in the Cloochman Saddle area in southern Idaho County at 9:40pm and the Idaho County Sheriff's Office reported that Salas was last seen at 10:30am when he and his hunting partner split up.

The Senate resolution added that the search and rescue team for the State of Idaho was led by an experienced and competent Corporal Justin Scuka of the Idaho County Sheriff's Search and Rescue in partnership with Idaho Sheriff's Office, Valley County Search and Rescue and two Bear Air and Life flight helicopters.

"Numerous volunteers comprised of many families and friends from Boise, Idaho provided supplies, cooked meals, and participated in the search and rescue. Likewise, many other members from other states and Saipan flew in to assist in the search and rescue mission. All members of the search parties provided unrelenting support in the efforts to rescue Joe Salas and continued to search without ever giving up despite the fact that most members of the search and rescue had little to no experience in the extremely rugged terrain of Idaho wilderness," the resolution stated.

Fortunately, after six days of continuous search, the search parties were able to successfully rescue Salas in a remote wilderness area in French Creek drainage, an area that leads into the Salmon River located in the Payette National Forest.

The resolution added that Moses Sablan, a former resident of the CNMI, found Salas after he traveled approximately 13 miles from the trailhead after hearing Salas shouting out for help.

"The Senate of the 18th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature and this full body hereby recognizes with utmost appreciation to the search and rescue parties for their tireless and courageous efforts in assisting to find our brother and friend Joe Salas after being missing from a hunting trip for six days in the wilderness of Idaho."

The Senate added that it "greatly admires" and "appreciates" the efforts of the people of the CNMI, while abroad from our islands, in supporting each other during critical times such as the search for Salas. ***(Mark Rabago)***

Man sues diving tour shop for alleged non-payment of minimum wages, OT

A former employee of a diving tour shop has filed a lawsuit in federal court against his former employer for allegedly not paying him overtime and the hourly minimum wage.

JSM Maras is suing Galaxy Company Ltd., which owns DPIS-Divers Paradise on Saipan, for unpaid wages and overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act and the CNMI Minimum Wage and Hour Act.

Maras, a citizen of Chuuk, asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to hold Galaxy Company liable to pay him $14,358.19 in unpaid and overtime compensation, plus damages, court costs, and attorney's fees.

Saipan Tribune repeatedly tried but failed to obtain comments from Galaxy Company yesterday.

Attorney Stephen J. Nutting, counsel for Maras, stated in the complaint filed last week that Maras was employed by DPIS as a diver/helper/tank charger/cleaner from Aug. 16, 2013, to Oct. 4, 2014.

During the employment, Nutting said, Maras was required to work more than eight hours a day, seven days a week.

Nutting said the plaintiff was not given a day off and could only enjoy a day off if he did not show up for work or called in sick.

He alleged that DPIS never set a schedule or recorded Maras' time on the job or computed his pay based upon the hours actually worked.

The company, Nutting said, has not provided Maras with any payroll salary slip indicating the total of his hours worked and applicable wage rate.

Maras allegedly received his salary in cash every month in the amount of $600 a month except for his first month, when he did not receive any pay since the company demands that new hires work the first month without pay.

After one year, the company increased Maras' salary to $800 a month.

Maras apparently has no information as to whether the salary he received is net of the taxes or other necessary deductions due on his income.

Nutting said his client does not have any information as to whether the company paid the necessary payroll taxes, including Social Security payments which were due resulting from his employment.

Throughout his employment, Maras has kept his own records of the time he reported for work and the time he left work.

Nutting said the $600 a month Maras received from the employer is below the equivalent of his total wages computed for his work hours done for 30 days at the mandated minimum wage of $5.55 per hour.

Instead of being paid an hourly wage and time and a half for overtime as required by law, Nutting said the employer paid Maras the same straight amount of $600 a month except on his first week where he worked for 96 hours and was paid $20 for overtime.

"Throughout the entire period of employment and up to Oct. 4, 2014, Maras has not been paid the minimum wages due for each 40 hours of works performed in any given week under the contract or as required by law," the lawyer alleged. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

4 homestay students stay for holidays

By JAYSON CAMACHO
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REPORTER

Four homestay students under the Saipan Mayor's Office cultural exchange program is on the island to experience the way the CNMI celebrates the holiday season.

The students arrived yesterday afternoon at 3pm with their chaperones. The students are from the International Youth Association of Japan Kokusai Seishonen Kenshu Kyokai group from Tokyo.

This is their second time to visit this year. Earlier in July, students from KSKK visited the island as well.

Today, Dec. 26, the students will be visiting the Mayor's Office at 9:30am and will be visiting several of Saipan's historic sites.

On Saturday the students will be enjoying a swim at the Pacific Islands Club. On Sunday they will spend time with their host family and learn the island's culture. On Monday, the students will visit Managaha Island and have a "sayonara" party in the evening. The students will then leave on Tuesday morning.

In related news, Sanpo En is planning a Japan trip from Feb. 4 to 10 next year, according to mayor's office cultural exchange program coordinator and mayor's executive assistant Yuki Kishimoto.

Kishimoto said that 12 students and three chaperones are being invited, along with the mayor and one translator.

For more information on the homestay program or Japan trip, call the Saipan Mayor's Office at 234-6208 or visit its office at the second floor of the Ladera Building along Beach Road in Oleai.

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LOCATIONS - Saipan & Rota

Inos, Torres, Kilili meet to discuss military, economic dev't issues

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan met yesterday with Gov. Eloy Inos and lieutenant governor-elect Ralph Torres to discuss where and how they will be able to work together on the military buildup, economic development, and other concerns during the 114th U.S. Congress, convening in January.

"I very much appreciate Governor Inos taking the time to meet," Sablan said. "There are a number of areas of overlapping responsibility between us. I want to be sure that I work closely with the governor over the next two years, so that we can accomplish as much as possible for the people of the Northern Mariana Islands.

"With respect to the military buildup, particularly, it is important that I understand the governor's position on the use of public lands and the extent to which that use may expand. The Commonwealth government is ultimately responsible for public lands in our islands.

"In keeping with the governor's opposition to the use of Saipan as a site for Air Force divert field activities, for example, I have already been able to put some constraints on the military in the context of congressional authorization and funding for the Air Force.

"Likewise, I will be taking my cue from the governor when it comes to the development of training ranges or the acquisition of new land areas in the Marianas by the military.

"What the governor decides is best for the use of public lands I will try to support when Congress reviews and approves military activities."

The three officials also discussed future economic development in the Northern Marianas and how federal policies and regulation may impact that development.

The future need for labor in conjunction with the casino development was also on the agenda for the three officials.

"It took a tremendous effort; and right up to the final days of this Congress I did not know if we would succeed in extending all of the existing immigration policies that were put in place to help with the transition from local to federal management of immigration in the Northern Marianas. But we did succeed," Sablan reported.

"So now we have the CW program for another five years. We keep the bar on claims of asylum, which is a basis for tourism from China and Russia. We remain exempt from the national cap on H visas. And the E-2C businesspeople, who were promised by Commonwealth immigration law that if they invested here they could live here, will be able to stay.

"We were not able to give the CW workers who have been here for 10 years or more–whom our local businesses rely on and trust–a way to continue living here on a more permanent status. Some of our legislators opposed solidifying our workforce in that way during this Congress.

"On other economic development issues, however, I look forward to working with the governor. For instance, during our Nov. 26, 2014, teleconference, I did ask him to provide me with the Commonwealth's plan of development that I can share with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"Permitting development projects can be complicated when there are endangered species present, as we have seen before here in the Marianas," Sablan said.

"But I have already talked with Fish and Wildlife about how to expedite permitting; and the agency assures me that they are willing to put more personnel into permitting in the Northern Marianas. They just need sufficient lead time, a year or so, to reconfigure staff, because here in the Pacific Fish and Wildlife is already stretched pretty thin dealing with offshore wind energy proposals in Hawai'i, for instance." ***(PR)***

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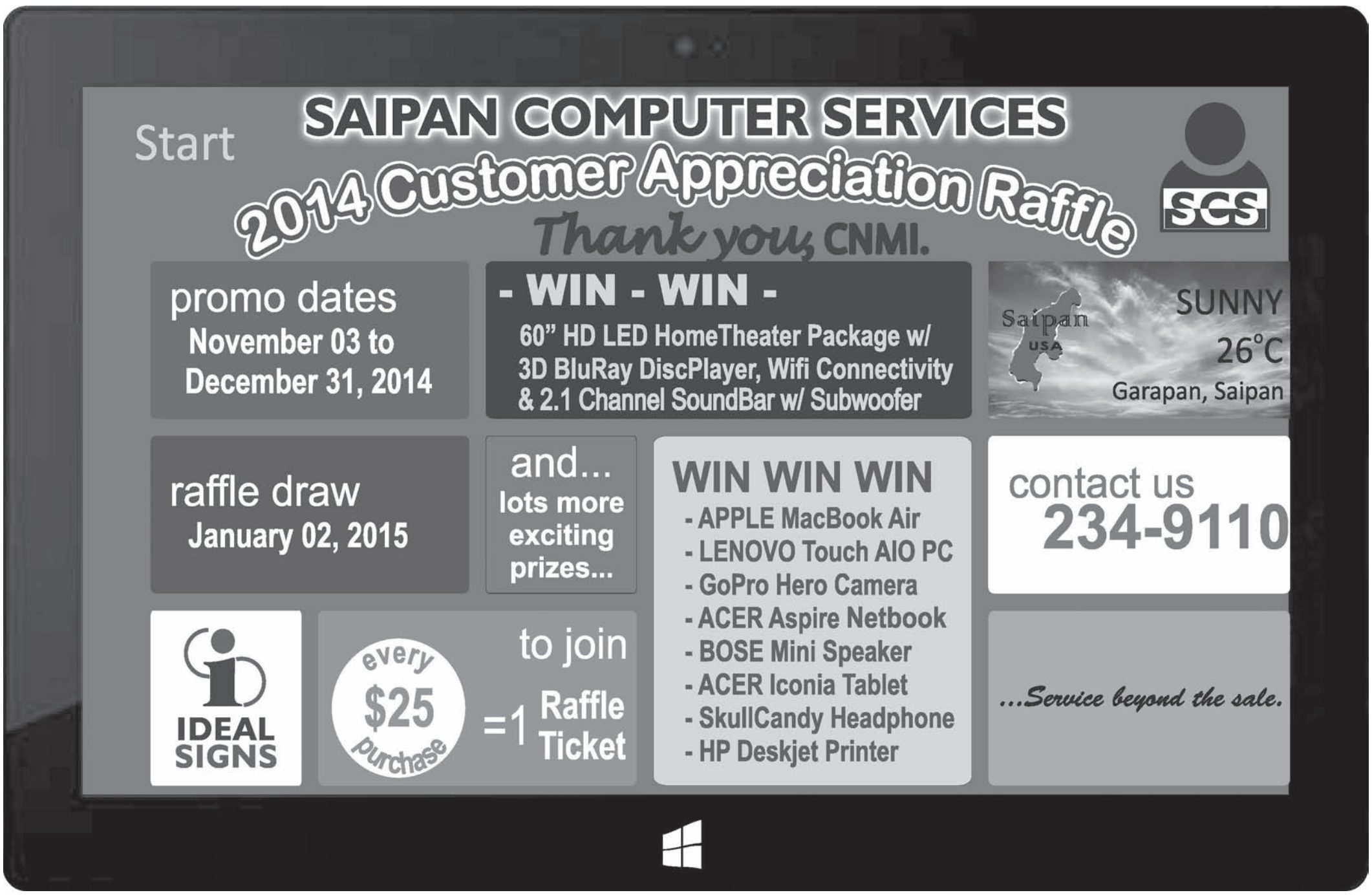

Translocated bird populations faring well

Birds translocated under the Marianas Avifauna Conservation Plan are doing "much better than expected," according to Division of Fish and Wildlife biologist Tyler Willsey. The plan in part translocates birds to islands in the Marianas that are free of the brown tree snake, with the aim to create self-sustaining satellite populations there.

The translocation project began in 2008. Since then DFW has released Bridled White eyes, Golden White-eyes, Rufous fantails, and Mariana fruit dove onto the island of Sarigan.

"[The birds] have all done much better than expected and seem to have colonized a majority of the native forest on the island," Willsey told *Saipan Tribune.*

"Monitoring went well for all species and we documented several unbanded birds of all of the species, meaning that they are breeding and naturally occupying the island," he said.

This June, DFW will target another island for the bird translocation project.

"We will bringing Tinian Monarchs and Bridled White-eyes up to Guiguan in June. What we will do is capture and band/mark the birds on Tinian and take them up to Guiguan. We will then release them and track them for the next 10 days to make sure there are not any mortality events, and also to see where they move to and what kind of habitat they are using," he said.

The MAC project has seven focal species for concern: the Marianas Fruit Dove, Rufous Fantail, Tinian Monarch, Nightingale Reed-warbler, Bridled White-eye, Rota White-eye, and Golden White-eye. Six target islands also have been proposed: Sarigan, Guiguan, Alamagan, Pagan, Agrihan, and Asuncion.

A total of 184 birds total have been translocated from Saipan and Tinian to Sarigan from 2008 to 2012, according to a MAC working report.

They reportedly monitor translocated birds through radio-tracking, tagging, and surveying. ***(Dennis B. Chan)***

Missing swimmer feared dead off Guam

HAGATNA, Guam (AP)—A 24-year-old man is believed dead after he jumped into the ocean off Guam and was last seen being swept out to sea, officials said.

Kevin Tuttle jumped into the ocean Sunday near the Marbo Cave area, Guam Fire Department officials told the *Pacific Daily News*.

Based on information provided by responders, Tuttle is believed dead and the effort has turned from search-and-rescue to body recovery, said Lt. William White, a Coast Guard spokesman.

"There are locations to jump into pools of water," White said. "Unfortunately for this event, when he jumped in, he got swept out."

Tuttle's father attempted to call for help, but didn't have a cell signal. He asked three hikers to go farther up the road, where there is better coverage, to call authorities.

The Guam Fire Department scanned the land near the shore, while the Coast Guard searched the ocean and nearby caves Sunday. A Navy helicopter also searched the water before rough seas led officials to call off the search Sunday night.

The same water conditions, including a high-surf advisory, are forecast for much of the week.

PSS donates toys to Karidat

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

The Public School System's Central Office donated this week about 30 toys bought with money from a silent auction they had among staff recently, according to Elsa Castro who dropped off the toys at the Karidat office this Tuesday.

"During the time of Christmas, where needy families don't have anything to unwrap, the silent auction was good opportunity to raise funds to buy gifts for those kids…the kids who really need it the most," Castro told the *Saipan Tribune.*

According to Castro, the silent auction was the idea of associate commissioner of curriculum and instruction Jackie Quitigua, and soon caught on with other offices in PSS Central.

The silent auction was comprised of unused items PSS employee and staff brought from their households, according Castro. The items included brand-new luggage, towels, handbags, diaries, pencils, headband sets, perfumes, fragrance products and other household items.

"A lot of times we buy things that we don't use," she said. They had a week to gather the times, and held the auction last week Friday.

The toys were bought from Lollipops and Joeten, according to Castro. She targeted toys for kids aged 36 months and below up to 16 years old, she said.

The 30 toys purchased were worth $217. 50, she added.

She hopes PSS will start earlier next year, aiming hopefully at November to start raising money.

"I hope we continue. We're going to aim to start early, and hopefully we raise close to $500, if not a $1,000," she said.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

DECEMBER 26, 2002

Govt eyes agency shutdown

Gov. Juan N. Babauta has vowed to explore all options that the government could take—be it government downsizing or the shutdown of a department or two—just so he could replenish the Special Rebate Trust Account to pay off the $19-million tax rebates and refunds owed to CNMI taxpayers. Babauta made the assurance Tuesday after reporting on the termination of the $19-million loan negotiations with the Bank of Guam. The bank, in a legal opinion by its legal counsel, had pulled out from negotiations after expressing worries that the public indebtedness being pursued by the local government was "unconstitutional." "We're assessing the fact that we set out to negotiate this loan in good faith, along with the approval of the Legislature. Frankly, I think Bank of Guam could have been more forthcoming in negotiating this loan," said Babauta.

'It was a peaceful Christmas'

It was a peaceful celebration of Christmas this year, with no holiday-related injuries or emergency cases brought to the Commonwealth Health Center as of yesterday. "There was no injury or any untoward incident. We didn't receive cases related to the Christmas celebration. It's a good thing," said CHC nurse supervisor Diego Kaipat. He cautioned families, though, to be mindful of their actions during the New Year's Eve celebration to avoid injuries. "We call on parents to supervise their children in lighting firecrackers. Let's be very careful," he said. Kaipat said he has seen several outlets selling firecrackers since last week, which he said could point to a possible increase in accidents.

DECEMBER 26, 2005

Ex-senator Atalig to withdraw his appeal

Former senator Ricardo S. Atalig wants to withdraw his appeal of the federal court's order that denied re-sentening him over his conviction on wire fraud charges over a "ghost employee scheme." Atalig's attorney, Steven Pixley, told the Saipan Tribune that he would withdraw the appeal from the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Pixley said the decision came about after he reviewed applicable law and discussed the matter with his client. Last Nov. 7, Pixley notified the appellate court that he would appeal the federal trial court's Oct. 27, 2005 order that denied Atalig a re-sentencing. Earlier, on Oct. 19, 2005, the appellate court tossed back the case to the trial court for Atalig's re-sentencing, without mentioning the rationale behind the decision. U.S. District Court Chief Judge Alex R. Munson denied Atalig's re-sentencing, upholding his August 2003 ruling that meted out five years and three months imprisonment and a $40,000-fine against the former lawmaker.

'All set for the inauguration'

All is set for the Jan. 9 inauguration of the incoming administration of governor-elect Benigno Fitial and lieutenant-governor-elect Timothy Villagomez, according to an officer of the transition team. Miriam Seman, who is in charge of managing the transition team's operations, told the Saipan Tribune that the inauguration Mass will be held at the Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Jan. 8 at 3pm. Seman said the inauguration ceremony would then be held at the American Memorial Park on Jan. 9 at 2pm. The inaugural ball will follow at the World Resort in Susupe, Seman said. When asked about prominent personalities expected to grace the inaugural ceremony, she only hinted that there will be "VIPs" coming from Washington D.C.

DECEMBER 26, 2010

MVA named most active NTO in Korea

The Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) has been recognized by Korea's leading travel weekly Global Travel News as the Most Active National Tourism Office in proportion to budget, besting 21other international NTOs. MVA Korea was selected by GTN based on NTO assessments for 2010. The Northern Mariana Islands shares the top honor with Hawaii, also represented in Korea by AVIAREPS Marketing Garden. "The Marianas Visitors Authority has been very strategic in our spending due to our limited budget, and it's an honor to be recognized for our efforts," said MVA managing director Perry Tenorio. "The MVA office in Korea was highly evaluated for maintaining strong partnerships with our trade partners in Korea and also for extending its marketing efforts to other parts of Korea beyond Seoul. I credit our Korea-based and NMI team for their hard work on behalf of Northern Marianas tourism."

TAKING PRIDE JACK VILLAGOMEZ

This World War II monument at Vicente Sablan Beach in Susupe is one of the many monuments built to honor the American soldiers who died during the invasion of Saipan (June 15 to July 1944). This is a major landing site that should be respected. However, some of those who visit the picnic place leave their trash behind. The toilet facility is filthy and cannot be used. The concrete picnic shelters are in dire need of repairs. We invite tourists to visit our beautiful island and this is what we have to show them. Are we proud of our beaches? Do local people deserve clean picnic areas?

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A very special advance happy 1st birthday to Ava Paige Hamilton Aldan. You have been truly a blessing in our family. Much love from Mommy, Daddy, Britt, Jacob, and Tiana.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Belated happy birthday to our darling angel, Bryanna Mae C. Camacho! You are the inspiration of our lives. Greetings come from Dad, Mom, and sister.

Inos OK's bill giving $5M from MPLT for CUC stipulated orders

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Gov. Eloy S. Inos signed into law Tuesday a bill appropriating future Marianas Public Land Trust interest distributions to meet the CNMI's obligations under a settlement agreement it signed with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

It comes less than 24 hours after the Senate on Monday approved HB 18-216, HS1 on first and final reading by a unanimous vote of 8-0, with Sen. Paul A. Manglona (Ind-Rota) absent.

HB 18-216, HS1, which now becomes Public Law 18-71, instructs the Department of Public Lands to "immediately transfer" at least $5 million to MPLT.

MPLT will then loan $5 million to the CNMI government at an interest rate of not less than 7 percent per annum to be used to satisfy the Commonwealth's obligation under its settlement agreement with EPA.

During the Senate session Monday, CUC executive director Alan Fletcher and legal counsel James Sirok said that in general they are supportive of the bill, save for a provision crediting the $5 million used to satisfy the government's agreement with EPA to settle outstanding arrears of the Public School System and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

The provision the CUC officials are alluding to is section 2 (d) of the PL 18-71, which reads, "Upon notification from the Secretary of Finance that the $5,000,000 has been deposited with the Court Registry, CUC shall credit $1,738,940 for Public School System's past due utility bills and $3,261,060 for Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation's past due utility bills. The $1,738,940 credit for Public School System shall satisfy the Commonwealth's outstanding obligation under the Maintenance of Effort Assurance."

Fletcher said it doesn't consider the $5 million as payment for the outstanding debt of PSS and CHCC since the "money goes directly to the court." He said the utility company cannot simply "write off" some of the government's debt just because it deposits $5 million that will be used for CUC projects.

Under its settlement agreement with EPA, the local government is required to deposit over $22.8 million until 2018 to complete some stalled Commonwealth Utilities Corp. projects.

Aside from the $5 million it must deposit by Dec. 31, 2014, into the U.S. District Court for the NMI's court registry, other court-mandated payments to settle the CNMI government's agreement with EPA are as follows:

- $2,800,000 no later than Feb. 1, 2015;
- $5 million no later than Feb. 1, 2016;
- $5 million no later than Feb. 1, 2017; and
- $5 million no later than Feb. 1, 2018.

HB 18-216, HS1 passed the House of Representatives last Dec. 18.

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*Satellite tournament entry fee: $100 (must be at least 6 players)
100% of the Satellite pool is redistributed as follows:
1st place winning a spot in our Super Satellite tournament and 50% of the pool
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Our Super Satellite Tournament
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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

Protesters didn't cause slayings of New York police officers

Without sufficient thought and care, the nation could too easily allow the cruel ambush killings Saturday of two New York City police officers to undermine the often tense but crucial national dialogue on race and policing that was spurred by the deaths of African American suspects earlier this year at police hands in Ferguson, Mo., Cleveland, New York, Los Angeles and elsewhere.

It is hard to know whether to see the attack on Officers Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu as in the same vein as other shootings of innocent people by unhinged gun-wielders--from Aurora, Colo., to Newtown, Conn., to Santa Monica--or as the baser act of a hardened criminal with a long record, contempt for human life and a hatred of police.

It is apparent from his social media posts, though, that Ismaaiyl Brinsley tried to connect himself to protests over the deaths of Michael Brown in Ferguson and Eric Garner in New York. And unfortunately, some police officers, shaken no doubt by the killing of their colleagues, are making the same connection Brinsley did. New York police union chief Patrick Lynch, for example, lashed out at "those who incited violence on the street in the guise of protest."

But it is utterly unreasonable to suggest that people who have been protesting the use of excessive force by police are somehow responsible for provoking the actions of a cop-killer. To follow Lynch's argument to its logical conclusion, communities that have felt the brunt of abusive police tactics must not object, lest their demonstrations incite criminals or the deranged to attack police. That's a non-starter. There is a conversation taking place on race and policing, and it necessarily will include protests against injustice, real or perceived.

If that conversation is to hold any promise of being productive or transformative, it is important for Americans to remember that police officers each day face the prospect of the kind of attack that took the lives of Ramos and Liu. It is equally important for police to keep in mind that many people, especially in African American communities, likewise fear violence daily, not just from criminals but from the very officers sworn to protect them. That fear is based on decades of racially biased policing, not all of it relegated to the past. And there is reason for concern among all Americans that, while violent crime is declining, the killing of suspects by police is increasing.

New York Mayor Bill de Blasio was correct to call for a timeout from protests, pending the funerals of the slain officers. Going forward, though, the dialogue must continue.

(c)2014 *Los Angeles Times*

Time for Bushes, Clintons to yield the floor to new generation of leaders

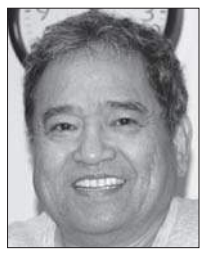
With the recent announcement that he'll begin exploring a 2016 presidential bid, former Florida governor Jeb Bush has be-

See PROTESTERS on Next Page

Incarnare

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime Vergara previously taught at SVES in the CNMI. A peripatetic pedagogue, he last taught in China but makes Honolulu, Shenyang, and Saipan home. He can be reached at pinoypanda2031@aol.com.



I do not read Latin but as an English teacher, I do occasionally have to search the etymology of words. One that is theologically bandied about this season is the word "incarnate," a revered word in the telling of the biblical Christmas story. As such, it is clean and unobtrusive, told on stage by newly washed young 'uns who might be getting up the stage for the first time, anxiously self-conscious even if they only have to play shepherds watching their sheep in the field at night!

"Embodied in human form" is the formula from the "Word becomes flesh" in the *logos* song of the Gospel of John. Lest we hightail it on the "form" as simply that of an empty shell, let us get down a notch more corporeal. Think *carne*, the red meat dripping in blood, flesh on sinews, cartilages, and bones on the cutting edge of the knife at Sabalu. The Roman Church insists the Eucharistic meal's elements turn into the actual body and blood of Jesus on consecration, leaving disciples open to the charge of fanged carnivores, as they were once accused before old Constantine took them as allies by the Byzantium portals.

Tomas de Aquino's metaphor was *summum bonum* before we split theology from the science lab, relegating the former to the realm of metaphysics beyond grubby hands but understood in the niceties of our souls. In the colorful language of Dostoyevsky's Brothers Karamazov, that's *nyet;* don't mean nothin' across the Urals anymore. Incarnate, in any contemporary sense, is meat--woof, wart, woe and wail--all of it!

What makes *incarnare* critical in the ancient faith of this season's babe in the manger is its distance from the *dejado* posture of the garden of Eden, a result of Augustine's guilt of enjoying too much the pleasures of the flesh, generalizing the confessional "sin" as the common condition of every creature bar none save the incarnate Jesus of the Christmas story. Flesh devoid of meat was made mystical, transcendent to the babe with reality on everyone else universally grounded on the slippery slope of low morals and epidermal perfidy.

In 2014, it is the meat, the flesh as it came with all its glory and wonder through a lengthy planetary evolution imprinted in the DNA of our humanity. Ah, that is still too metaphorical for comfort. OK. Let's look at what came out of Mama's womb. Already, we are skipping the intricate incidence of fetus conception, a 9-month journey of one hell of a miracle, if one may be allowed that metaphor.

Let's take the body that made us conscious when we noticed our ability to expel "pee" and produce "poo." After childbirth, the brain developed to connect nodes that shaped all of life's experiences. Critical were the first three years when the neurons received visual, auditory, and gustatory stimuli that divided cells, with the signals sent by a complex electrochemical process through synapses.

Anyone who has taken biology and tried to get the mind around cells and the cell division process called mitosis where 50,000 cells are replaced every second is confronted by the immense complexity of just the act of breathing. Jump to body systems and functions acting in harmony in a surprisingly efficient manner and it renders the most sophisticated android to the level of an exhaust pipe to a well-functioning vehicular engine, a byte in the giga-wondrous world of wonder!

We currently name 10 of these systems that enables us to live. We shan't define them, though most will recognize them in their own bodies. They are the urinary, circulatory, respiratory, and digestive systems that process sustaining air, water, and solids; then there are the muscular and the skeletal systems where all hang out, defended by the lymphatic system while hormones of the endocrine system scurries messages about, with the traffic managed in the primary central organ called the brain of the nervous system whose byways include the spinal cord and an extensive peripheral network. The reproductive system replicates the whole evolutionary shebang.

When I first dined with my host family, the housemother apologized for not having enough food of the 15-course meal on the table. After assuring her that there was enough, she apologized for not being a good cook, so some were either under- or-over done. She was trained to make excuses for "what is" as never sufficient; the element of achievement needed define identity and assures the relevance of vocation.

I say, we already won on the word "go". TAGA *Sports* has an article of a Saipan team shunning the culture of winning. Way to play, folks!

Incarnate is the affirmation that one's birth, just showing up, is enough not only without apologies but in celebration of the emotive and the cognitive, of spirit and psyche; most importantly, it begins at the level of the meat. Before it comes to "unto thy hands I commend my spirit" comes *incarnare,* "my body given, my blood poured out, for thee."

At the Christmas table, reverently pause when you ask: "Pass the meat, please."

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Kicking the tires

By ED STEPHENS
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Visit Ed Stephens Jr. at EdStephensJr.com. His column runs every Friday.

When it comes to car culture, Saipan loses nothing to the mainland. So let's kick the tires today. We'll take a look at the December issue of *Consumer Reports* magazine, which offers predictions of new car reliability based on recent data from over 1 million car owners.

Consumer Reports has long been a best friend to car buyers, offering objective information on vehicle repair histories gleaned from surveys sent to vehicle owners. The April edition is traditionally the automotive edition and it's always full of useful information. But April is a few long months away, so if you're planning to get a new car for the new year, or if you just enjoy armchair driving, December's issue is worth a look.

Here's the first thing I looked up: Compact pickup truck ratings. Compact pickup trucks are as common as coconut trees on Saipan.

So it probably won't surprise you that the Toyota Tacoma pickup truck tops the list for predicted reliability for compact pickups. Second to Toyota is Nissan.

Since we're in the pickup truck realm, I'll note that for full-sized pickup trucks, the Toyota Tundra tops the predicted reliability list. All the American brands, by unhappy contrast, are listed in the "below average" category. I don't see the Ford F150 truck listed, so I'm going to assume that a total redesign of the truck means that there's no track record on which to base a prediction.

Stepping back to the broadest picture, where things are summarized by brand, and not broken down by model, the rankings for predicted reliability put Lexus first, followed by Toyota and then Mazda. This is generally consistent with the experiences I've heard about in my circles. Lexus, incidentally, is Toyota's premium label, so they are in the same family.

At the other end of the list, which is to say, the brands predicted to be least reliable, were Fiat, Jeep, and Ram. I believe that these names are all related these days, but I never kept up with it. I will note that the little Fiat 500 car is one of the coolest-looking cars on the road these days, so if you're giving points for style, you'll smile at this car.

Looking at the rest of the list, I'll note that it has some real surprises on it, but you can buy the magazine if you're interested, so I'll leave it at that.

During the holidays I usually visit with various pals. Cars are always a topic of conversation, and during holiday gatherings, while everyone sensible is relaxing by the fireplace, the guys always gravitate to the garage, beers in hand, looking at the machinery: cars, trucks, and motorcycles. We grew up turning wrenches as shade tree mechanics, and we always liked Detroit iron.

And when I say iron, I mean iron. Iron heads. Iron blocks. Oh, yeah.

But those days are gone, relegated to coffee table picture books, photo albums, and boutique show rooms for rich enthusiasts. By contrast, I think modern cars are regarded more like appliances; nice to look at when they're shiny, and certainly comfortable and useful, but I don't think most people feel particularly attached to them.

As much as I liked the old-school iron, I will note some advantages of the more modern breeds.

Along those lines, I'll note, first of all, that these days, even a mediocre car will often go 100,000 miles without any repairs and with only light maintenance.

Meanwhile, anti-lock brakes and four-wheel disk brakes are common, which is a lot better than the old lead-sled days when cars often had the braking performance of deep-draft supertankers.

And, close to heart for anyone on Saipan, air conditioning is pretty much standard nowadays, while in my youth it was usually an expensive luxury.

Although I don't have any actual data for this, my experience leads me to suspect that many components such as hoses, belts, tires, and brake pads last a lot longer than they used to. Spark plugs, of course, can go 100,000 miles nowadays, which is nice.

People who claim to know such things have told me that today's cars (at least in the U.S. market) produce pollution that is but a few percentage points of what cars used to belch out, so, whatever the numbers are, I'd say that any improvement is welcome improvement.

In our family, the record for miles driven falls to a Honda that has gone over 400,000 miles; second place goes to a Nissan that went over 350,000 miles. A Toyota and a Lexus have hit the 200,000 mile point, and I'm hoping my Ford will show the flag and hit the double-century mark.

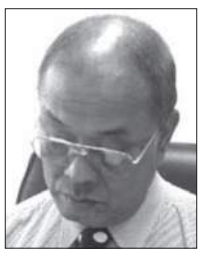
If I had to name one "sleeper" brand in cars, I'd say that it's Mazda. I've never owned one, but all the owners I've known have liked them immensely, so I wonder why I don't see more of them these days. Also, Korean makers such as Hyundai and Kia are earning more respect all the time, placing ahead of the middle of the pack in the *Consumer Reports* ranking for new cars.

Well, so much for today's glance at the new car scene. They paved paradise and put in a parking lot, so you might as well go for a drive, eh?

Information is power!

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.*



From the first break of dawn I'd surf the Internet rummaging through information of events unfolding in Japan, South Korea, and other Asian countries. Sounds boring but trust me these events have ripple effects here—positively or negatively—throughout the course of the year.

The term "globalization" used among ASEAN countries is one strange word most folks here don't care about either. It's a vehicle, though, that allows for healthy competition in the export of local manufactured, harvested or grown produce from apparel, fish, coconuts, and others. Here, the dust of manufacturing settled fatally silently when the $2.1 billion apparel industry forcibly put on shutters.

It's a term though that matters to this scribe in that whatever happens nearby eventually washes up on our shores. For instance, if the Japanese economy slides south it almost automatically means far less visitors to the NMI over the course of the year. The same is true when the Chinese economy is derailed for one reason or another. It also reduces the number of visitors and investments to the islands.

Furthermore, we have a single-legged fickle economy like tourism. It makes it imperative that we watch events nearby closely if only to prepare for events that would adversely impact tourism. It affects money in the local treasury. If it goes south or decreases it compresses negatively our ability to pay for such public services as health, education and safety in the community.

Interesting how our Pinoy brothers and sisters have benefited from this concept while it flies over our nimble minds. They've demonstrated resiliency and assimilative ability into the shifting sands of globalization. Nothing stops as they muddle through propping up their manufacturing and other sectors. The republic has over three million skilled workers working all over the global village whose fully honed skills are in demand everywhere. I don't know if we could say the same of our people whose aspirations is the most coveted seat in the NMI.

It makes it imperative that we foster literacy on issues of significance. Why have I kept abreast of the golden coconut industry in the Philippines? It's a $9 million sector annually where coconut oil and other by-products from coconut have been manufactured and sold worldwide. Here where everybody wants to be governor we've trashed it altogether! It's money, friends, from an endemic plant we have in abundance.

I'm interested in your considered views. No one has been appointed the general manager of the universe nor is one's view etched in stone. Thus, let's converge and trump out our cards. And it begins by learning separating people from issues. Steer clear hurling aspersions. Meanwhile, keep reading whatever you could grab for the sake of staying informed. I get my inspiration rummaging through major national and international newspaper editions, studies and materials of interest, daily.

The 2015 Challenge

In quiet spiritual contemplation of what's before him I know the governor has the welfare of his people uppermost in his mind. Such mood reminds me of what President Franklin Roosevelt said in 1933, in his First Inaugural Address: "These dark days, my friends, will be worth all they cost us if they teach us that our true destiny is not to be ministered to but to minister to ourselves and to our fellow men."

It's one tough task untangling the annihilation of the local economy triggered by the federal takeover of immigration and the persistent push in additional policies to ensure complete destruction. Lumped with failures of previous governors, no wonder the NMI is in such fiscal disarray. But with meticulous and resolute planning Gov. Inos could slowly but surely lead the NMI to economic prosperity once more. Though guardedly optimistic I'm still hopeful it could be done.

Foreign investment paradigm

For nearly four decades now, we've seen the use of the foreign investment approach to spur economic development and growth. Most of what we've seen is in the form of hotels and golf resorts.

The only manufacturing we had was literally killed by the feds' takeover of immigration. It's a grand policy of destruction that annihilated the local economy. Nothing else has happened since recent past. Is there vision and leadership here at all?

We were left to fend for ourselves despite a commitment under the Covenant Agreement that the US develops the NMI so we attain a "progressively higher standard of living." So far we've made progress with food stamps and Medicaid.

But we must not quickly point an accusatory finger at Uncle Sam for what may have gone wrong. It's time that we begin owning up to our end of responsibility instituting a "government of the people, for the people and by the people". It means buckling down to defining and exercising the real essence of self-government. Or have we started wholesaling our future to the highest bidder?

This is a truly humiliating reflection upon the NMI in the eyes of our benefactors in Washington. I'm sure DC has placed us on its radar screen to see how else do we wish to screw things up. It's a bad transition uprooting the foundation of "we the people" to "depravity" doubled down by "fiat" or whimsical dictatorial calls spun by the "we few" powerful boys on the hill. It's dangerous at every speed.

You see the foreign investment policy definitely requires critical review and revision. In other words, let's dissect it to see if it has worked in lasting fashion embracing the needs of the indigenous people beyond conventional approach to land valuation of public land. How much land is opened for developmental purposes or leases? Isn't land use for whatever purpose expansive? In other words, the size remains the same while its future use balloons!

There's a certain matrix that could be made a part of the land valuation concept. This and a sense of partnership are issues that we must worked on given our limited land size.

PROTESTERS

From Page 10

come the first nationally prominent Republican to lunge toward the GOP nomination. Meanwhile, on the other side of the aisle, all eyes are focused on Hillary Clinton, who's widely expected to announce a bid early next year.

It's all a little depressing, no?

Don't get us wrong. Gov. Bush proved himself a capable chief executive during his eight years in the Sunshine State. As for former secretary of state Clinton, she is certainly a formidable and impressive figure, even if her views differ from ours more often than not. What troubles us is not so much the individual records of either potential candidate but, rather, the dynastic impulse that they represent.

Consider this: Assuming that either Bush or Clinton makes the race in 2016, it will mean that nine of the past 10 presidential elections will have featured a member of the Bush or Clinton families somewhere in the mix (2012 was an exception). Of course, we laud both clans' dedication to public service--but, surely, a nation of more than 300 million people has enough political talent to keep the highest office in the land from being the near-exclusive purview of just two families.

For good or ill, the Bushes and the Clintons have shaped much of the past three decades of American politics. Perhaps, however, it is time they yield the floor to a new generation. Indeed, it seems even their own parties may be growing restless. Progressive dissatisfaction with Clinton is not negligible, and the same can be said of conservatives' reaction to Bush.

There is something unseemly about this quasi-aristocratic tendency taking hold in a constitutional republic. Rotating a diverse cast of characters through high office is a healthy impulse in a country such as ours. We wish Bush and Clinton well in their respective endeavors – but we also welcome an influx of fresh blood to keep them on their toes as 2016 approaches.

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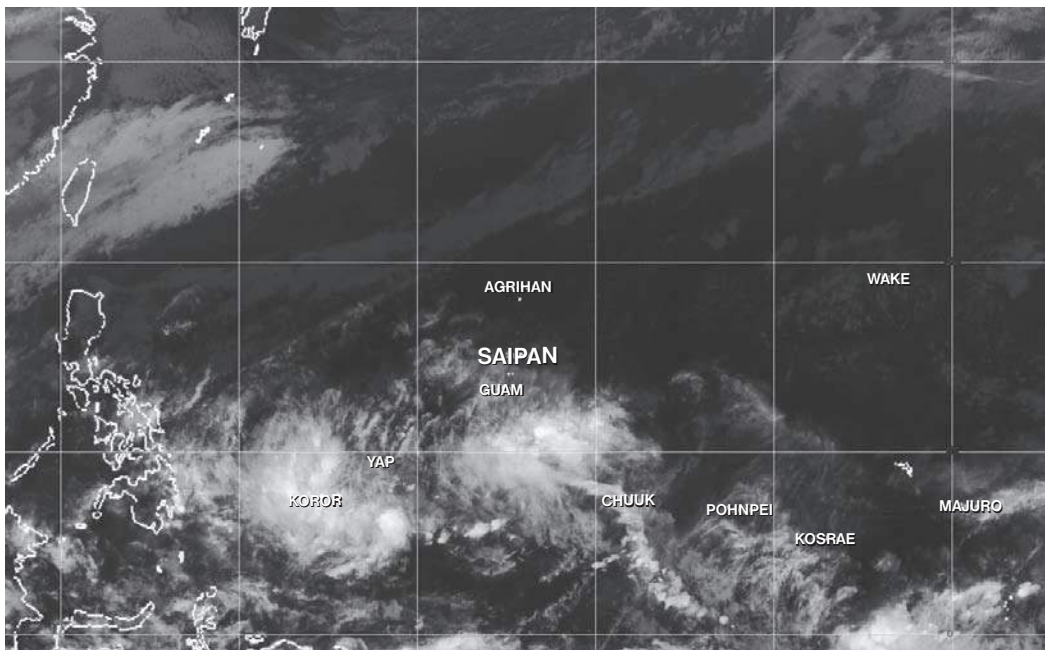
The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Partly sunny and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼78°	▲88° ▼78°	▲88° ▼78°

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2014
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front transitions to a shear line north of Minami Tori Shima at about 25N155E. The shear line then continues to beyond 13N130E. Cloudiness and patchy showers are found along and up to 450 miles northwest of this boundary. A shear line fragment is producing scattered showers west of Guam and Rota between 13N and 15N from 138E to 145E. A surface trough extends eastward then southeastward from near Koror at 5N133E to a weak circulation centered southwest of Chuuk near 2N145E then continues east-southeastward to near EQ154E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are present around Koror and Yap between 4N and 10N from 131E to 143E west of Chuuk between 4N and 11N from 144E to 151E and south of Pohnpei and Kosrae south of a line extending from 5N157E to 1N165E. Trade-wind convergence is triggering scattered showers over Tarawa and Butaritari well south of Majuro within 135 miles of a line extending from EQ168E to beyond 4N180.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼80
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼79
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼78
Chuuk	Mostly Cloudy	▲85	▼80
Pohnpei	Cloudy	▲87	▼79
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲85	▼81
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼81

Around the Globe

Auckland	Partly Cloudy	▲70	▼60
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	▲42	▼23
Hong Kong	Showers	▲63	▼59
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲80	▼68
London	Rain	▲43	▼40
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲63	▼43
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼74
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲68	▼50
Miami	Thundershowers	▲77	▼69
New York	Windy	▲53	▼37
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲44	▼32
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	▲44	▼39
Pusan	Sunny	▲45	▼32
Rome	Sunny	▲55	▼35
Salem	Partly Cloudy	▲47	▼39
San Francisco	Sunny	▲58	▼46
Seoul	Sunny	▲32	▼18
Tokyo	Sunny	▲46	▼34
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	▲52	▼36

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

4:34 AM	Today	Low Tide:	-0.3 Feet
11:27 AM	Today	High Tide:	2.1 Feet
5:30 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.9 Feet
10:22 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:40 AM	5:54 PM
Saturday	6:41 AM	5:55 PM
Sunday	6:41 AM	5:55 PM
Monday	6:42 AM	5:56 PM
Tuesday	6:42 AM	5:56 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	10:03 AM	10:11 AM
Saturday	10:52 AM	11:09 PM
Sunday	11:38 AM	
Monday	12:24 AM	12:06 AM
Tuesday	1:10 PM	1:02 AM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 12, 2014

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA5070	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA5068	8:00am	8:50am	3
UA5068	8:40am	9:30am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	2:20pm	4:00pm	6, 7 via Rota
UA5078	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 5
UA5038	3:10pm	4:00pm	2, 4
UA5040	6:55pm	7:45pm	1, 5
UA5078	8:35pm	9:25pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5044	10:40pm	11:30pm	1, 5

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA5039	2:20pm	2:55pm	6, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA5039	3:25pm	4:00pm	6, 7

SAIPAN-PALAU (ROR)

DL287	6:05am	1:05am+1	2, 6 via NRT

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	6:05am	8:40am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
DL297	4:20pm	7:05pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
7C 3401	4:30pm	8:20pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764A	1:30am	5:30am	4, 7
MU764	1:30am	5:30am	1, 5

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5069/PR111	2:45am	4:50pm	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	7:20am	2, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	8:45pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	9:10pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
DL287/473	6:05am	9:50pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via NRT
UA5071/PR111	6:40am	4:50pm	3 via GUM
UA5071/PR111	7:15am	4:50pm	1, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:00am	9:50pm	3 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5039/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	6, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	5 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	1 via GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:50pm	Daily via ICN

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ606/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:10am	12:50pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:40am	12:50pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5070/179	4:15am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5068/179	8:00am	10:35pm	3 via GUM
UA5068/179	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5039/179	2:20pm	10:35pm	6 via Rota-GUM
UA5078/179	3:10pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA5069	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA5071	6:40am	7:30am	3
UA5071	7:15am	8:05am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	1:00pm	1:50pm	6, 7
UA5038	1:10pm	2:40pm	2, 4 via Rota
UA5077	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 5
UA5041	5:35pm	6:25pm	1, 5
UA5077	7:15pm	8:05pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5043	9:20pm	10:10pm	1, 5

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA5038	1:10pm	1:45pm	2, 4

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA5038	2:05pm	2:40pm	2, 4

PALAU (ROR)-SAIPAN

DL298	4:30am	3:00pm	3, 7 via NRT

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:55pm	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
7C 3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ605	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:30pm	5:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763A	4:30pm	12:30am+1	3, 6
MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	4, 7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	3:10am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA5041	7:35am	6:25pm	1,5 via GUM
PR110/UA5077	7:35am	8:05pm	3, 6, 7 via GUM
PR110/UA5043	7:35am	10:10pm	1, 5 via GUM
DL172/288	9:40am	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7 via NRT
UA190/5077	9:55am	8:05pm	2, 7 via GUM
UA190/5077	10:00am	8:05pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA184/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5038	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	4 via GUM-Rota
UA184/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/5038	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	2 via GUM-Rota
UA184/5077	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	5 via GUM
UA184/5041	10:59pm	6:25pm+1	5 via GUM
UA184/5077	10:59pm	8:05pm+1	2 via GUM
UA184/5043	10:59pm	10:10pm+1	5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ746/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ750/603	1:10am	2:20pm	Daiily via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA180/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA180/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA180/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6 via GUM
UA180/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA180/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1, 5 via GUM
UA180/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA180/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

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TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Mon, Tue,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

Guns and our rights

The recent homicide by a cop raised the voices of those opposed to gun ownership to a whole new level. That's OK, freedom of speech is our right under the 1st Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Likewise, gun ownership is a right provided and guaranteed under the 2d Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which further states that this right shall not be infringed. We are talking about rights, not privileges.

Recently, the CNMI Senate, aware of a pending lawsuit in our courts, introduced Bill 18-69 which aims to proactively circumvent federal law by further infringing on our right to import, buy, sell and legally register guns with a $1,000 tax levied for *every* gun imported into the CNMI. Exempted are air rifles and .22 rimfire rifles. FYI, PCP rifles are just as strong as many .22 caliber guns but they are way silent, do not need to be registered and hey, anyone can own them!

We live in dangerous times, people sell and use drugs, rob, invade homes and worse, people murder. As humans, we are naturally flawed. While there are inherent dangers to anything that fires a projectile out of a barrel, we cannot control the person, anybody who chooses to commit a crime. We focus too much attention on the dangers associated with guns but choose to either ignore or forget the dangers brought about by the use of alcohol, which by the way kills more people in the U.S. than guns. And we hardly ever read about those stories because the media chooses to sensationalize gun related incidents. After all, news organizations are businesses and common stories blasted in our faces sell; they make money. Forget the readers, they are suckers for anything that contains the words kill and guns.

So, with all the hoopla going on, common sense will once again take a back seat while our Legislature once again tries to do anything they can to ensure we do not own guns. Can they do this? Can they enact a local law that is supreme to federal law? Can they continue to thumb their noses at the U.S. Constitution and get away with it? Do we have to respect the law when our own government does not?

In 1999, our Legislature enacted Public Law 6-38. This law contradicts the 2d Amendment and rulings by the U.S. Supreme Court. Yet not one member of the Legislature since 1999 has lifted a finger to correct this. The term political eunuchs comes to mind and rightfully so. We are literally forced to remain at the mercy of the criminals, having to resort to fending off criminals and defending our homes and families with machetes, *tangan tangan* sticks and the occasional rifle against an illegal handgun carried by someone hell-bent on doing harm.

Think what you want, scream your opinions about guns but do *not* infringe this right. We are not so stupid to assume that once guns are outlawed, our criminals will respect and obey the law. This is 2014 yet our islands are stuck in the 1800s with antiquated mindsets built on utopian ideals that have no relevance and no legal basis.

Upon entering service, members of the U.S. military swear to defend the Constitution of the United States and thousands gave up their lives doing so. Quite a few came from the CNMI. Is this how the Legislature chooses to honor their service? By willfully ignoring and challenging the supremacy of the Constitution of the United States? What have you done for their country beside enjoying the grants and stamps? By the way, should you choose to not own a gun, don't. You don't have to exercise your right to own one but do not preach to me about my rights and don't try to take away or infringe on my gun rights, you are not qualified to do so.

Noel S. Reyes
Dandan, Saipan

COMMONWEALTH PUBLIC UTLITIES COMMISSION

Amended Request For Proposal
CPUC-RFP-14-001
CPUC Expert Consultant Services

The Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission ("CPUC") hereby issues this amendment to the solicitation for competitive sealed proposals from a qualified Firm/Individual(s) to provide consultant services for and on behalf of the Commission in connection with its regulatory oversight duties of public utilities, telecommunication carriers and cable television operators during business within the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. This amendment extends the proposal due date, establishes a new opening date and sets another pre-bid conference.

The Scope-of-Work remains unchanged by the amendment and will be e-mailed upon request, to all interested Proposers, by CPUC. Requests for Proposal (RFP) packages may be obtained by email by sending an email request to cpuc.cnmi@gmail.com. The requesting email shall clearly identify the name, address and telephone number of the requesting party as well as specify the name and title of the contact person for the requesting party. A non-refundable registration fee of One Hundred U.S. Dollars ($100.00) must be paid to CPUC in cash, cashier's check or certified check payable to the order of the Commission to complete the registration and be deemed a registered proposer. The payment may be made by personal delivery to the CPUC office located at the CDA Building, Unit #103, Beach Road, Oleai, Saipan, Monday to Friday, 9am to 1pm. Payment may also be made by certified mail to the following address: Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission, P.O. Box 501219, Saipan MP 96950. The registration fee shall be deemed paid upon CPUC's receipt of the funds. For additional information, contact Commissioner Dave Guerrero by email at cpuc.cnmi@gmail.com or call 235-2782 (CPUC).

A pre-bid conference will be held on **December 29, 2014** at 10:00 a.m. at the CPUC conference room located at Unit 103, Ground Floor, CDA Building, Saipan, CNMI. All inquires from Proposers must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 AM (CHST) local time on **December 26, 2014** to Commissioner Dave Guerrero by email at cpuc.cnmi@gmail.com or by postal mail addressed to Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission, P.O. Box 501219, Saipan MP 96950. CPUC will only respond to questions and clarifications from prospective Proposers who have completed registration with the CPUC for the solicitation. The response to an inquiry from a registered Offeror will be transmitted to all other registered Proposers without identifying the Proposer that made the inquiry.

One (1) original and three (3) copies of a proposal must be submitted in a seal envelope marked **"RFP-14-001: CPUC Expert Consultant Services** no later than **January 7, 2015** at 4:30 p.m. (CHST) local time. The submission can be by personal delivery or by certified mail or private courier. A submission by mail or private courier must be deposited for delivery on or before 4:30 p.m. **January 7, 2015**. A copy of the entire submission is also required to be sent by email to cpuc.cnmi@gmail.com by 4:30 p.m. CHST local time on **January 7, 2015**. Late submissions, conditional offers and incomplete proposals will not be considered. The proposals will be publicly opened at 10:00 a.m. on **January 8, 2015** at the CPUC Conference Room located at Unit 103, Ground floor of the CDA Building, Saipan, CNMI.

The proposer is required to submit a copy of its CNMI Business license or a copy of its filed CNMI Business license application within five (5) days upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract. The contractor will also be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws.

All bidders are advised that CPUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CPUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the bid under this request.

Selection procedure shall be in full compliance with CPUC Procurement Regulations. Contract/s will be awarded to the most responsive proposers, as adjudged by the Source Selection Committee (SSC). CPUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the Request for Proposal in the interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CPUC.

/s/ **Joseph C. Guerrero**
Chairperson, CPUC

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NMC, CNMI to vie for registered apprenticeship grant next year

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI is a forming a team led by the Northern Marianas College to vie for a $2 million to $4 million apprenticeship grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, according to NMC dean of administration and resource development David Attao.

Attao told *Saipan Tribune* that NMC is teaming up with the Public School System, the Northern Marianas Technical Institute, and the CNMI's Workforce Investment Agency and other CNMI departments in vying for the grant.

NMC will act as the "lead writers" of the grant proposal, according to Attao. The deadline for the grant is April 30 next year. The grant is among the $100 million in grants being offered by Labor to expand registered apprenticeship programs across the United States.

Attao updated the Board of Regents on the grant opportunity in their meeting on Monday. The CNMI governor has ultimate authority and signature over the grant, it was learned. Attao said the team writing the report would meet this week.

He said the grant has a "floor and ceiling" of $2 million and $4 million.

DOL announced the $100 million in grants on Dec. 11 this month. Approximately 25 grants will be awarded using funds collected from employers who use H-1B visas to hire foreign workers, according to DOL.

The hundred million dollar initiative is intended to expand registered apprenticeship programs over the country in industries like healthcare, biotechnology, information technology and advanced manufacturing.

Labor intends to help fill jobs that are projected to hire a substantial number of new workers in the coming years, as well as provide training for jobs that have been transformed by 21st century technology and innovation.

Labor also aims to train jobs in new and emerging industries. Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez called apprenticeship the "other four-year degree" in an earlier statement this month.

"[Apprenticeship] is a tried and true job training strategy that offers a reliable path to the middle class, with no debt," he said. "I encourage everyone to apply for this federal grant so that we can significantly scale apprenticeships opportunities for many more Americans in new industries and occupations."

A freshman with senior reading level

By THOMAS MANGLONA II
CORRESPONDENT

» Jingco: Books are my escape

With a reading level close to that of a college freshman, Dr. Rita Hocog Inos Junior and Senior High School freshman Mary Heather Jingco reads to "escape reality."

The 13-year-old student scored a 12.9 in her school's annual Accelerated Reader Renaissance Learning test as a 9th grader.

Most children in her grade are expected to score around the 9.7 to 11.0 grade level category. Jingco's score means her reading, vocabulary, and writing skills are equivalent to that of a senior student with an additional nine months of education.

According to the Accelerated Reader website, the test assists teachers and librarians in managing and monitoring children's independent reading practice.

The same test is taken by the entire student body, and Jingco holds the title of top-scorer.

"I read to escape reality. Whenever I feel stressed because of school, I just open a book and I enter a whole new world," she said. "Reading gives people more knowledge. It takes me places that I have never been before."

She said her passion for reading was sparked when she joined the PGFC speech competition on Saipan as a Grace Christian School Rota representative. Her performance of the book *A Prisoner's Confession* garnered her a first place spot her category.

Jingco said she has read over a hundred books since that moment. Her favorite? The **Harry** Potter series.

"I usually read to my sister and my dogs," she told *Saipan Tribune*. "I love reading because sometimes reality can be stressful."

Jingco skipped the 3rd grade and is also a two-time spelling bee winning representative for Rota. Last year, she placed in the top 15 spellers in the Guam regional competition.

Besides being a vivacious reader, Jingco is also adept with a pen in her hand. After completing her homework assignments and reading a few chapters of her novel of the week, Jingco writes anime fiction stories. Her work can be found on Wattpad, a website where readers and writers from across the globe publish their stories.

The Rota teen doesn't plan to pursue a career in English, but hopes to become an animal biologist.

She urges other youth like her to read more books. "Reading helps us not only get smarter, but also understand concepts and the people around us,' she said.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Mary Heather Jingco, right, poses for photo with her sister Neri, right, at her junior high graduation ceremony. She is the daughter of Riza and Nester Jingco.

Navy to begin Route 16 road repairs

ASAN, Guam—U.S. Navy contractors will conduct asphalt repairs on Route 16 between the Commercial Tire Depot and the Guam Main Facility in Barrigada from Dec. 26 through the end of January. Repairs are necessary due to a 24-inch water line break in October.

Motorists traveling north and southbound should expect lane closures and/or shifts during this time and are advised to follow all posted signs and speed limits to ensure safety.

This is a preliminary advisory. Schedules and repair activities are subject to change as weather or other conditions permit. The public is encouraged to stay tuned to local media for updates.

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Escape S	EUD12669	Blue	$3,000.00
Escape SE	EUB67717	Red	$3,500.00
~~Explorer EcoBoost~~	~~EGB2~~ SOLD	~~Silver~~	~~$4,000.00~~
Explorer XLT 4WD	EGB05148	Darkside	$4,000.00
F150 STX 4WD	EKE73316	Silver	$5,000.00

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Altima SV	EC157024	White	$3,000.00
Rogue S	EC754914	Silver	$3,000.00
NV200 SV	EK696537	White	$3,000.00
~~Frontier SV~~	~~EN71~~ SOLD	~~Silver~~	~~$3,000.00~~
Frontier PRO4X	EN747027	Red	$4,000.00
Xterra PRO4X	EN807863	Red	$4,000.00
Maxima SV Sport	EC457171	Mocha	$4,000.00
~~Pathfinder Platinum~~	~~EC65~~ SOLD	~~Gray~~	~~$5,000.00~~

HONDA	STOCK #	Color	Discount
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~~Civic LX~~	~~EE00224~~ SOLD	~~Blue~~	~~$2,500.00~~
Civic LX	EE046655	Maroon	$2,500.00
Civic LX	EE065865	Silver	$2,500.00
~~Accord LX~~	~~EA26617~~ SOLD	~~Silver~~	~~$3,000.00~~
~~Accord EX~~	~~EA18773~~ SOLD	~~Silver~~	~~$3,000.00~~
~~CR-V LX~~	~~EL02628~~ SOLD	~~Blue~~	~~$3,000.00~~
~~CR-V EX~~	~~EL02846~~ SOLD	~~Mocha~~	~~$3,000.00~~
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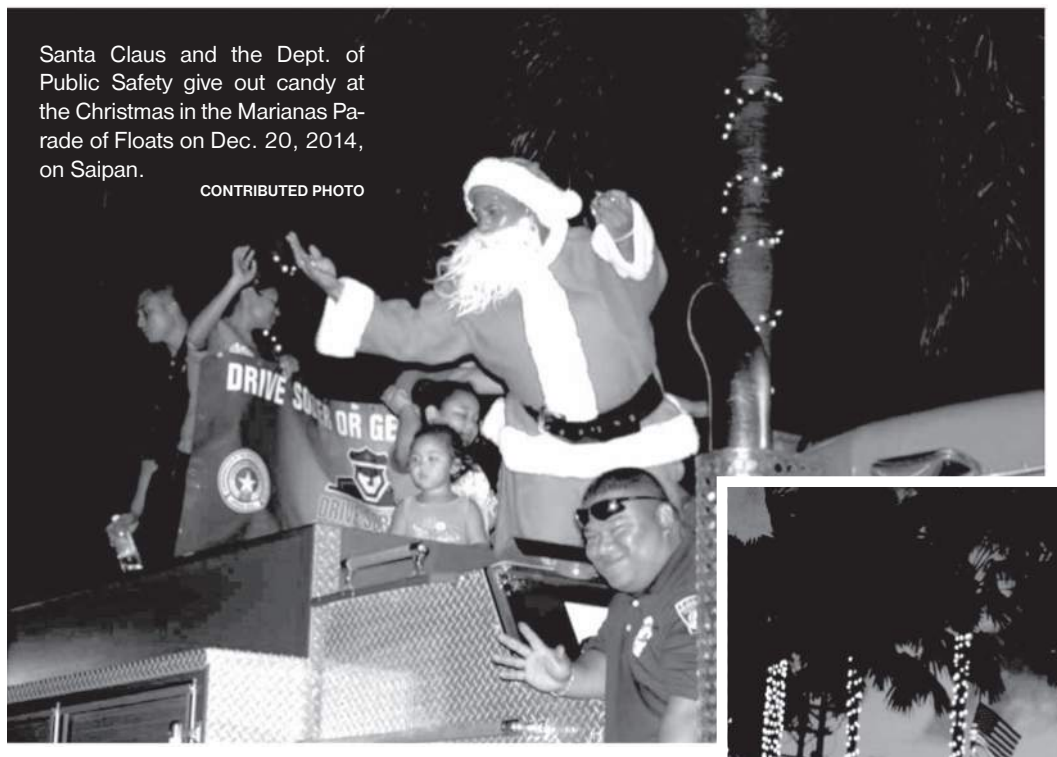
Mochitsuki Festival at Paseo de Marianas on Dec. 27



Santa Claus and the Dept. of Public Safety give out candy at the Christmas in the Marianas Parade of Floats on Dec. 20, 2014, on Saipan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

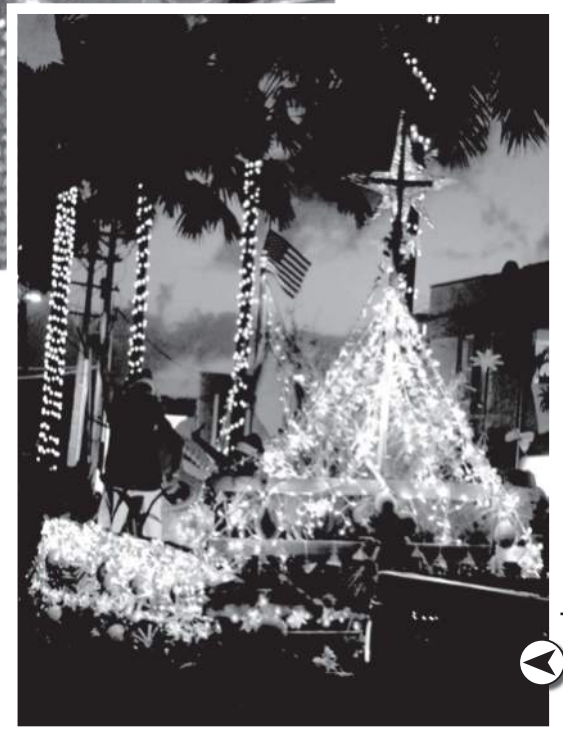
Organizers of the annual "Christmas in the Marianas" celebration and the Japan Society invite all revelers to join this Saturday's (Dec. 27) Mochitsuki Festival at Paseo de Marianas. The festival marks the season preparation of *mochi*–a dough-like substance of glutinous rice–for the Japanese New Year.

Winners will also be announced for the Christmas Tree Decoration Contest, Christmas Caroling Contest, and Christmas Parade held earlier this month. Entertainment, games, and food sales will run from 5pm to 9:30pm.

"It's been a very enthusiastic Christmas in the Marianas celebration all month at Paseo de Marianas, and we invite the community to come down and celebrate the Mochitsuki Festival on this final Saturday," said Marianas Visitors Authority community projects manager Martin Duenas.

This Saturday's entertainment lineup includes: CNMI Awadori Dancers (5pm), Ukulele Jammers (5:30pm), Motchitsuki Festival (6pm), Poksai Guma Chamorro (6:30pm), Hopwood Jr. High (7pm), awards presentation and Refaluwasch Warriors (7:30pm), Uncle Ben' Music and Dance (8pm), and Out of the Ordinary band (8:30pm), and Saipan Music and Dance School (9pm)

Christmas in the Marianas is organized by the MVA, Team PDI, and PDM Promoters. Additional sponsors and supporters include: T Galleria, Tan Siu Lin Foundation, DOCOMO Pacific, Kinpachi Restaurant, CNMI Public School System, Japan Saipan Travel Association, Country House Restaurant, RNV Construction, MISA Ent., Power 99, Moby Dick Restaurant, KKMP, Magic 100FM, KCNM, Teach PDI, Chamolinian Cultural Village, and Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture. ***(MVA)***



Several schools participated in the Christmas in the Marianas Parade of Floats on Dec. 20, 2014, on Saipan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

San Antonio Elementary School participated in the Christmas in the Marianas Parade of Floats on Dec. 20, 2014, on Saipan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Southern High School participated in the Christmas in the Marianas Parade of Floats on Dec. 20, 2014, on Saipan.

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Business

Sony broadly releases 'The Interview' in reversal of plans

LOS ANGELES (AP)--Amid a swell of controversy, backlash, confusion and threats, Sony Pictures broadly released "The Interview" online Wednesday - an unprecedented counterstroke against the hackers who spoiled the Christmas opening of the comedy depicting the assassination of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

"It has always been Sony's intention to have a national platform on which to release this film," Sony Pictures chair and CEO Michael Lynton said in a statement. "We chose the path of digital distribution first so as to reach as many people as possible on opening day, and we continue to seek other partners and platforms to further expand the release."

"The Interview" became available on a variety of digital platforms Wednesday afternoon, including Google Play, YouTube Movies, Microsoft's Xbox Video and a separate Sony website, a day after Sony and independent theaters agreed to release it in over 300 venues on Christmas. The wide digital release is the culmination of a set of deals that have been in the works since the major theater chains last week dropped the movie that was to have opened on as many as 3,000 screens.

Kim Song, a North Korean diplomat to the United Nations, condemned the release, calling the movie an "unpardonable mockery of our sovereignty and dignity of our supreme leader." But Kim said North Korea will likely limit its response to condemnation, with no "physical reaction."

Seth Rogen, who stars in the film he co-directed with Evan Goldberg, cheered the decision.

"I need to say that a comedy is best viewed in a theater full of people, so if you can, I'd watch it like that. Or call some friends over," he tweeted.

It was unclear whether the company will recoup the $40 million cost of the film and the millions more spent on marketing by deciding to release it online through affordable formats.

Sony has not ruled out the possibility of screenings of the film by major theater chains, though their symbiotic relationship has eroded in recent days.

Decisions by Google and Microsoft to show the movie could open their sites to hacking. Microsoft reported technical problems with its Xbox sign-in system Wednesday, though it wasn't known whether it was the result of hacking. Microsoft declined to comment.

Sony's initial decision not to release the film was widely criticized, with President Barack Obama one of the harshest critics.

U.S. officials have blamed North Korea for the hacking, and White House spokesman Eric Schultz said Obama welcomed the latest development.

Obama, asked whether he plans to watch the film, paused his golf game and smiled.

"I'm glad it's being released," he said on the 18th hole.

Obama was golfing with Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak at a military base in Hawaii, where the president and his family are vacationing.

Among the early viewers was 11-year-old Marco Squitieri of Washington, D.C. Squitieri had wanted to watch "The Interview" since seeing a preview earlier this year and had followed the news about Sony pulling the movie then permitting its release. Squitieri's family purchased "The Interview" from Xbox for $14.99.

More 'Help Wanted' signs up at small businesses

NEW YORK (AP) -- If you're looking for signs that the U.S. economy is growing and that the job market is improving, just talk to small business owners.

After cutting back on spending for years, people are splurging again. That's evident at Lady M Cake Boutiques.

Revenue is up 40 percent this year at the New York-based company with more customers paying $60 to $85 - three or four times what a supermarket cake costs - for confections made of paper-thin pastry dough and flavored with ingredients like green tea and chestnuts. Business is so good that owner Ken Romaniszyn, who has two locations in Manhattan and one in Los Angeles, plans three or four next year in New York, Boston and Charlotte, North Carolina. He'll hire 60 new employees to staff the stores, adding to Lady M's current staff of 145.

His cakes, which once appealed mostly to the wealthy are now attracting a wider range of customers, Romaniszyn says.

"The middle class, they can afford to make a special occasion a little more special," he says.

The U.S. economy is growing at a solid pace. This week, government figures showed that consumers and businesses drove growth to a sizzling 5 percent annual rate last quarter. Fewer Americans are applying for jobless benefits. In the first 11 months of this year, employers have added 2.65 million jobs. That already makes 2014 the best year for hiring since 1999.

A good chunk of the good news can be attributed to improvements at small companies. Reports from payroll company ADP and software maker Intuit show small business hiring has gained momentum since the summer. The trend looks to continue - surveys by Wells Fargo & Co. and the National Federation of Independent Business show more owners plan to bring in new employees in the coming months.

Honda recalls 1,252 Crosstours over side air bags

NEW YORK (AP) -- Honda is recalling 1,252 Crosstour vehicles due to a faulty side air bag made by troubled air bag supplier Takata.

The Honda recall is for 2015 model year Crosstours. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says the side air bag may not inflate properly because of a problem with its inflator tube. Crosstour owners will receive a letter in the mail asking them to take their car to a Honda dealer and have the side air bags replaced free of charge.

Honda said no injuries were reported. Takata Corp. declined to comment.

Takata, a Japanese air bag maker, is at the center of massive recalls around the world. Several automakers have recalled vehicles with air bags made by the company because they can explode and send shards flying at drivers and passengers. In response to the recalls, Takata on Wednesday apologized to those killed or hurt by its faulty air bags and announced it was reshuffling its executives.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-15-004

SECURITY GUARD SERVICES

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), Office of the Executive Director is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms to provide Security Guard Services for various posts at CUC, Saipan, Tinian and Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check, wire transfer or credit card in the amount of $100.00 for one package set. Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division by December 29, 2014 to be considered.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a site visitation of CUC Saipan Facilities will be held on **December 30, 2014** at 10:00 a.m. (ChST) at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No. 17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building. A site visitation of CUC Rota Facilities will be conducted on January 2, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. (ChST). A site visitation of CUC Tinian Facilities will be conducted on January 5, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. (ChST).

Contractors must provide proof of "Indemnity Liability Insurance," specifically covering security workers assigned to CUC's compound. Coverage must be a minimum of $200,000.00. The Contractor shall agrees to and indemnify and hold CUC harmless from and against all liability, loss, damage or injury, and all cost and expenses (including attorneys' fees and costs of any suit related thereto) suffered or incurred by the Cooperative, arising from or related to Contractor's negligent performance under the contract.

Bidders shall provide a certification signed by a principal of the company stating that the company is currently in full compliance with all applicable CNMI and Federal Labor Laws and has been for the past Five (5) years. Bidders shall submit a listing of all of its employees (US & Foreign) with corresponding job titles and a certification of good standing from the CNMI Department of Labor. Failure of the company to provide the certification is grounds to reject the entire bid.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-15-004, Security Guard Services", to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST, Saipan Time) on January 15, 2015** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bid in anticipation of a contract. This request and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. All responses to this Invitation for Bids should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the bidder, awarded a contract.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on **December 31, 2014** to Manny B. Sablan, Purchasing Officer, CUC Procurement & Supply Division via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Vincent Pangelinan, Safety Officer, CUC Compliance & Safety Division via email address vince.pangelinan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and to waive any defects in said bid, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

ALAN W. FLETCHER
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-15-008

8" ACP WATERLINE ABANDONMENT FOR SAN VICENTE SERVICE AREA EXTENSION PROJECT, SAIPAN

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the 8" ACP Waterline Abandonment for San Vicente Service Area Extension Project, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. This work consists of disconnecting customer service lateral connections off the 8" ACP and reconnecting these customers on to the proper tank service area distribution main. Work will also consist of installing new gate valve assemblies and the abandonment of the 8" ACP waterline. Payment is only for the items completely installed and accepted by CUC. The duration of the contract is 190 calendar days from date of award of the contract.

This project is funded through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The IFB package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a site visit is scheduled on **December 31, 2014 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan.

One (1) original and Seven (7) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"8" ACP Waterline Abandonment for San Vicente Service Area Extension Project, Saipan"* to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 20, 2015**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. *A Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract. Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. All responses to this Invitation for Bids should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the bidder, awarded a contract.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. The award of a contract may be contingent upon the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) approval. If CPUC approval is required, the contract will not be executed by CUC until such approval is provided.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 2, 2015** to Manny B. Sablan, Jr., Purchasing Officer, Procurement & Supply Division via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Yvonne Cabrera, Engineer, Water & Wastewater Division via email yvonne.cabrera@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in said bid proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

ALAN W. FLETCHER
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

Nation

Officer kills armed 18-year-old in suburb near Ferguson

BERKELEY, Mo. (AP) -- The mayor of the St. Louis suburb of Berkeley urged calm Wednesday after a white police officer killed a black 18-year-old who police said pointed a gun at him, reigniting tensions that have lingered since the death of Michael Brown in neighboring Ferguson.

A crowd of about 300 people gathered at the gas station where Antonio Martin was shot late Tuesday, throwing rocks and bricks in a scene reminiscent of the sometimes-violent protests that followed Brown's death. A smaller crowd gathered Wednesday night. Dozens of protesters met at the gas station for a vigil, then marched to Interstate 170, at times blocking traffic, before returning to the station, according to local media reports. Berkeley Police Chief Frank McCall told KMOV-TV that six to eight people were arrested.

Unlike the shooting of Brown, which was not captured on video, Berkeley Mayor Theodore Hoskins said surveillance footage appeared to show Martin pulling a gun on the unidentified 34-year-old officer who questioned him and another man about a theft at a convenience store. Brown was unarmed.

"You couldn't even compare this with Ferguson or the Garner case in New York," Hoskins said, referring to the chokehold death of Eric Garner, another black man killed by a white police officer.

Hoskins, who is black, also noted that unlike in Ferguson - where a mostly white police force serves a mostly black community - more than half of the officers in his city of 9,000 are black, including top command staff.

AP

Police try to control a crowd Wednesday, Dec. 24, 2014, on the lot of a gas station following a shooting Tuesday in Berkeley, Mo. St. Louis County police say a man who pulled a gun and pointed it at an officer has been killed.

St. Louis County Police Chief Jon Belmar did not provide more details about the theft Martin was being asked about. He said Martin pulled a loaded 9mm handgun and the officer fired three shots while stumbling backward. One hit Martin, who didn't fire his own gun. He died at the scene.

"I don't know why the guy didn't get a shot off, whether his gun jammed or he couldn't get the safety off," said attorney Brian Millikan, who is representing the officer. He said that the officer was lucky to be alive and certain he had no choice but to use lethal force.

Police throughout the country have been on alert since two New York officers were gunned down in an ambush last weekend by a man who had made threatening posts online about killing police. He later killed himself.

St. Louis County police and the city of Berkeley are investigating the shooting of Martin, which Belmar called a tragedy for both Martin's family and the officer, who has been on the force for six years.

"He will carry the weight of this for the rest of his life, certainly for the rest of his career," Belmar said of the officer. "There are no winners here."

The officer wasn't wearing his body camera, and his cruiser's dashboard camera was not activated because the car's emergency lights were not on, Belmar said.

Police released surveillance video clips from three different angles. The men can be seen leaving the store as a patrol car drives up. The officer gets out and speaks with them.

About 90 seconds later, one appears to raise his arm, though it's difficult to see what he's holding because they were several feet from the camera. Belmar said it was a 9mm handgun with one round in the chamber and five more in the magazine.

Police were searching Wednesday for the other man, who ran away.

Belmar said Martin had a criminal record that included three assault charges, plus charges of armed robbery, armed criminal action and unlawful use of a weapon.

Phone messages left for his parents were not returned. His mother, Toni Martin-Green, told the St. Louis Post-Dispatch that Antonio was the oldest of four children.

"He's like any other kid who had dreams or hopes," she said. "We loved being around him. He'd push a smile out of you."

His was the third fatal shooting of a young black man by a white police officer in the St. Louis area since Brown was killed by Ferguson officer Darren Wilson on Aug. 9. Kajieme Powell, 25, was killed Aug. 19 after approaching St. Louis officers with a knife. Vonderrit Myers, 18, was fatally shot on Oct. 8 after allegedly shooting at a St. Louis officer.

Each killing has led to protests, as did a grand jury's decision last month not to charge Wilson in Brown's death. A crowd quickly gathered late Tuesday in Berkeley. The demonstration involving about 300 people turned violent.

More than 50 police officers responded to protests Tuesday. Belmar said officers used pepper spray but not tear gas. Four people were arrested on charges of assaulting officers.

Belmar said three explosive devices, perhaps fireworks, were tossed near gas pumps. One officer hit by a brick was treated for facial cuts, and another was treated for a leg injury sustained as he retreated from an explosive.

CDC monitoring tech for possible Ebola exposure

ATLANTA (AP) -- A laboratory technician at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was being monitored Wednesday for possible accidental exposure to the Ebola virus that came during an experiment, officials said.

The person working in a secure laboratory in Atlanta may have come into contact with a small amount of a live virus, CDC spokeswoman Barbara Reynolds said in an emailed statement. The experimental material was on a sealed plate, but wasn't supposed to be moved into the lab in which the technician was working, Reynolds said. The worker will be monitored for 21 days and the person's name hasn't been released.

Additional employees have been notified, but none has required monitoring, Reynolds said. Other staff will be assessed for exposure.

There is no risk to the public and lab scientists notified CDC officials of what happened on Tuesday, Reynolds said. The lab has been decontaminated twice, and the material in question was destroyed before CDC officials became aware of the mistake.

The possible exposure is under internal investigation and has been reported to Secretary of Health and Human Services Sylvia Burwell, Reynolds said.

Transfers from the lab the experiment material came from have been stopped during the internal review, and the lab the exposure may have happened in is closed, Reynolds said.

The technician's potential exposure is at least the second to prompt a precautionary response from the agency in six months.

In June, at least 52 workers at the CDC took antibiotics as a precaution because a lab safety problem was thought to have exposed them to anthrax.

News of the technician's possible exposure to Ebola comes days after CDC Director Tom Frieden returned from West Africa, where an outbreak of the virus has killed thousands. Frieden said Monday that response to the outbreak has improved significantly in recent months, but the virus continues to spread in Monrovia, Liberia and Conakry, Guinea.

Public health officials have said Ebola spreads through direct contact with the bodily fluids of someone who is infected with the virus - putting health care workers and those in close quarters with infected people at higher risk of contracting the virus. Four health care and aid workers who contracted the virus have been treated and released from Emory University Hospital in Atlanta.

Dreaming of a white Christmas? Go West

NEW YORK (AP) -- If it's a white Christmas you're after, you'd better follow this familiar advice: Go West.

Snow will be falling in the western U.S. on Thursday, with anywhere from 2 to 6 inches in the valleys up to a foot in higher elevations in northern California, Utah, Idaho, Wyoming and Montana, according to the National Weather Service.

The Dakotas and Minnesota already have accumulations of several inches from Wednesday's storm.

Weather service spokesman Patrick Burke said gusty winds are expected in states such as Indiana, Michigan, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania - but not the snowy weather for which some holiday-minded people are longing.

"The place where it's tranquil is Texas and the Gulf Coast," he said.

Christmas Eve was windy, wet and warm across the country, creating headaches for travelers in the Great Lakes, the Northeast and a storm-battered swath of the South, where at least four people were killed.

More than 300 flights were canceled in the U.S. according to flight tracking service FlightAware. Chicago's O'Hare International Airport was hardest hit, accounting for about 100 of the cancellations.

In Michigan, utility companies braced for extremely strong winds a year after a storm put thousands of people in the dark at Christmas. The weather service said the strongest winds would last nearly until dawn on Christmas Day.

Crews were on standby Wednesday in anticipation of gusts of 45 mph or higher in the Detroit area, said DTE Energy spokeswoman Randi Berris.

Power companies struggled to restore electricity to thousands of people in Mississippi after severe weather killed at least four people, injured about 50, and damaged or destroyed an unknown number of homes and businesses.

Along the East Coast, a light but steady rain fell amid unseasonable warmth.

Sarah Stothers, of Washington, D.C., said as she stopped at a travel plaza on the New Jersey Turnpike that rain and fog made the trip tough, but it wasn't as bad as she had expected based on the weather forecast.

"I thought it would be a lot worse," she said. "I thought there would be a lot more people on the road."

Christmas Eve shooting kills 1 at Louisiana mall

GRETNA, La. (AP) -- A man who was shopping at a suburban New Orleans mall on Christmas Eve was shot to death at close range and a suspect was in custody, police said.

The incident happened around 4:20 p.m. Wednesday, less than two hours before the Oakwood Center mall in Gretna was scheduled to close for the holiday, said Jefferson Parish Sheriff Newell Normand.

The victim had just purchased something from Foot Locker and had turned from the cash register when a man walked within 3 or 4 feet of him and began shooting, Normand said. No one else was injured.

"Obviously, based on witness accounts, he walked in with purpose of shooting this particular individual," Normand said when asked if the person was targeted.

At least three shots were fired and the man was pronounced dead on the scene, he said.

Sheriff's office spokesman Col. John N. Fortunato said in a statement Wednesday night that the incident was captured on surveillance video and that the victim had been identified as 24-year-old James Vaughn of Harvey.

In the aftermath of the shooting, "there was bedlam in the mall," Normand said. Mall security, deputies and Gretna police calmed everyone to make for an orderly evacuation, he said.

Normand said the shooter was apprehended several blocks from the mall.

The suspect is a 25-year-old man, according to Fortunato's statement. The Associated Press is not naming him because he has not formally been charged.

Normand said authorities were questioning the man, who would likely face a charge of second-degree murder.

Asia

China tightens church control ahead of Christmas

BEIJING (AP) -- Two days before Christmas, members of a rural Christian congregation in the eastern city of Wenzhou welded some pieces of metal into a cross and hoisted it onto the top of their worship hall to replace one that was forcibly removed in October.

Within an hour, township officials and uniformed men barged onto the church ground and tore down the cross.

"They keep a very close watch on us, and there is nothing we can do," said a church official, who spoke to The Associated Press on Tuesday on condition of anonymity because of fear of government retaliation. "The situation is not good, as any attempt to re-erect the cross will be stopped."

That means that the worshippers in Wenzhou, like many Christians in the eastern Chinese province of Zhejiang, will worship this Christmas under a crossless roof. Provincial authorities have toppled crosses from more than 400 churches, and even razed some worship halls in a province-wide crackdown on building code violations.

Many Christians say their faith has been singled out because authorities, wary of its rapid growth, are seeking to curb its spread in a campaign that has targeted China's most thriving Christian communities.

Estimates for the number of Christians in China range from the conservative official figure of 23 million to as many as 100 million by independent scholars, raising the possibility that Christians may rival in size the 85 million members of the ruling Communist Party.

In August, Beijing rounded up Christian pastors and religious scholars in a national seminar with the edict that the Christian faith must be free of foreign influence but "adapt to China," a euphemism for obeying the Communist Party's rule.

This week, authorities in Wenzhou - known as China's Jerusalem because it has half of the province's 4,000 churches —have banned all Christmas celebrations or related activities in the city's kindergartens and grade schools.

"We had guidance on foreign holidays such as Christmas in the past, but this year marks the first time we issued a clearer notice," an education official was quoted as saying in a local, government-run newspaper on Wednesday.

ASIAN BRIEFS

2 men throw acid on woman in Indian capital

NEW DELHI (AP) -- Two men riding a motorcycle threw acid on a woman in a crowded neighborhood in New Delhi, causing serious injuries, police said Wednesday. The attack was captured on closed-circuit TV and was being investigated, police officer Suresh Chand said. It took place Tuesday when the two masked men rode past the woman in a crowded shopping area and brazenly flung acid at her face. Chand gave few other details, but news reports said the woman suffered serious burns to her face and her right eye. The men also stole her purse before fleeing. The attack, in a busy part of the Indian capital, highlights the attacks and harassment women face in India.

Abe takes office for 3rd term as Japan's leader

TOKYO (AP) -- Shinzo Abe took office Wednesday for a third term as Japan's prime minister, appointing a former military officer as his defense minister but keeping the other members of his previous Cabinet. Parliament re-elected Abe after his Liberal Democratic Party won a renewed mandate in a Dec. 14 snap election that the prime minister said was needed for him to carry out further economic and political reforms. Abe said economic recovery is vital to achieving his key policy goals such as stronger national security and carrying out the most drastic reforms of the economy since World War II. "My commitment to protecting public safety, lives and happiness is unchanged," Abe said in a late night news conference.

Chinese police kill 'religious extremist'

BEIJING (AP) -- Chinese police in the southwestern province of Guangxi stopped a group of "religious extremists" from illegally crossing into neighboring Vietnam after shooting one person dead and detaining 21 others, local authorities said. The statement Tuesday on the official website for the city of Chongzuo did not identify the religion, but Chinese authorities usually blame religious extremism for violence involving members of the Muslim ethnic minority of Uighurs in the country's far west region of Xinjiang. Beijing also warns that religious extremists have been seeking to leave China to train with militant groups. The Chongzuo government said police received a tip that the group was to enter Vietnam through the border town of Pingxiang and that they ambushed the group's two vehicles on Sunday night.

Survivors huddle after violence in India kills 72

SHAMUKJULI, India (AP) -- Rina Vor was putting her four young children to sleep in her village in India's remote northeast when she heard the gunfire ring out. She gathered the children and ran for safety.

On Thursday she sat huddled with her children in a church along with hundreds of other survivors of a rebel massacre that killed 72 Adivasi tribe members.

The attacks took place late Tuesday in Assam state's Sonitpur and Kokrajhar districts when police said rebels belonging to a faction of the National Democratic Front of Bodoland opened fire in five coordinated attacks.

The area of Shamukjuli saw some of the worst violence where 26 people were killed in a single attack.

Now Vor and others like her are seeking shelter in the church and a nearby school, too afraid to return home but also worried about their homes and belongings.

"There will be no celebrations for Christmas for us," she said as she wept.

The Adivasis are a mix of Hindus and Christians, and many like Vor were preparing for Christmas when the attack took place.

In the school, 7-year-old Sanjlai Hemrom, looking afraid and traumatized, sat silently with his younger brother. Villagers said the boys lost both parents in the attacks.

On Thursday, a curfew remained in the affected districts but there were no fresh reports of violence, said S.N. Singh, a local police official.

Mariana Studio is looking for Actors/Actresses for a NHK educational video. Candidates must be able to speak English.

Audition will be held on Saturday, December 27, 2014 and Sunday, December 28, 2014. Shooting will be held between January 14 to January 30, 2015.

All those interested must call (670) 322-0770 ext. 409 to schedule for audition.

Mariana Studio

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
MVA-RFP-15-2321

For: GARAPAN AREA TRASH COLLECTION SERVICE

Closing Date: January 9, 2015 Time: 3:00 p.m.
Submit sealed proposals to: Marianas Visitors Authority
P.O. Box 500861 CK
Saipan, MP 96950

Interested parties may pick up the scope of work at the Marianas Visitors Authority office between 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., (closed 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.) Monday to Friday, except holidays or by visiting the MVA website at www.mymarianas.com.

/s/ Marian Aldan-Pierce
MVA Chair, Board of Directors

/s/ PERRY P. TENORIO
Managing Director

Notice of Zoning Board Meeting

The regular meeting of the Zoning Board will be held on Thursday, January 8, 2015 at 5:00 PM, Multi Purpose Center, Susupe, Saipan
(Tel: 234-9661 ● Fax: 234-9666 ● e-mail: www.zoning.gov.mp)

A. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of December 04, 2014 minutes
5. Public Comments (not related to files for discussion under item B. Public Hearings)

B. Public Hearings.
1. Conditional Use Application #2014-3520: Carmen Safeway Enterprises Inc. dba Borja Funeral Home is proposing to operate a funeral home with crematory services on lots 006 H 11 and 006 H 30. This use is classified as "Funeral Homes" and is permitted in this district as a Conditional Use. This area is located along Beach Road, Susupe, north of Bank of Saipan, and east of Aquarius Beach Tower. It is zoned as Village Commercial.
2. Conditional Use Application #2014-2506: Saipan Adventure Tours, LLC is proposing to operate a zip-line amusement activity designed to enable users propelled by gravity to travel from the top to bottom of inclined cables. This use is classified as Amusement, Outdoor and will be located on lots 064 A 02, 074 A 01, 084 A 01, and 085 A 01 in Marpi. These areas are zoned as Rural, Public Resource, and Tourist Resort.

C. Communications/ Reports
D. Old Business.
1. None

E. New Business
1. Office Operations Report (Permit and Enforcement)
2. Notice of Intent and Public Meeting (Community Facilities Projects): The Commonwealth Zoning Board has filed an application with the USDA Rural Development for financial assistance to purchase a vehicle for the Zoning Office. A public meeting for comments will be held at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 8, 2015 at the Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe, Saipan.

E. Executive (Closed) Session.
G. Miscellaneous: Other Matters, Announcements, Next Meeting, Adjourn.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you require assistance, please contact the Zoning Administrator, Therese T. Ogumoro, at 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & 10 CMC 3511, et seq.).

/s/ Diego C. Blanco, Zoning Board Chairman

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

for

Carmen Safeway Enterprises Inc. dba Borja Funeral Home

The public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Carmen Safeway Enterprises Inc. dba Borja Funeral Home is proposing to operate a funeral home with crematory services on lots 006 H 11 and 006 H 30. This use is classified as "Funeral Homes" and is permitted in this district as a Conditional Use. This area is located along Beach Road, Susupe, north of Bank of Saipan, and east of Aquarius Beach Tower. It is zoned as Village Commercial.

Date: January 8th, 2015, Thursday
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Multi Purpose Center, Susupe, Saipan

The above application may be viewed at the Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan. Comments on the project may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments shall be submitted in writing to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan no later than 4:30pm, January 7th, 2015. Written comments may also be submitted via email to therese.ogumoro@zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 no later than January 7th, 2015.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & Saipan Zoning Law of 2013).

/s/ Diego C. Blanco, Board Chairman

NOTICE OF ZONING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

for

Saipan Adventure Tours, LLC

The public is invited to attend and provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on this request for Conditional Use Permit. Saipan Adventure Tours, LLC is proposing to operate a zip-line amusement activity designed to enable users propelled by gravity to travel from the top to bottom of inclined cables. This use is classified as Amusement, Outdoor and will be located on lots 064 A 02, 074 A 01, 084 A 01, and 085 A 01 in Marpi. These areas are zoned as Rural, Public Resource, and Tourist Resort.

Date: January 8th, 2015, Thursday
Time: 5:00 pm
Place: Multi Purpose Center, Susupe, Saipan

The above application may be viewed at the Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan. Comments on the project may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments shall be submitted in writing to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, Dandan, Saipan no later than 4:30pm, January 7th, 2015. Written comments may also be submitted via email to therese.ogumoro@zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 no later than January 7th, 2015.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please call 234-9661. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & Saipan Zoning Law of 2013).

/s/ Diego C. Blanco, Board Chairman

World

Faithful flock to Bethlehem for Christmas

BETHLEHEM, West Bank (AP) -- Several thousand Christian pilgrims on Wednesday flocked to the biblical town of Bethlehem for Christmas Eve celebrations at the traditional birthplace of Jesus, lifting spirits after a year of conflict and failed peace efforts.

The central Manger Square was decked out in white and yellow lights and a towering Christmas tree. On a cool, clear night, there was a carnival atmosphere: Vendors hawked corn, candied apples, watches, and balloons in the shape of cartoon characters.

Scout troops played bagpipes, horns and drums, and bands from around the world performed on a stage, singing Christmas carols and original Christmas rock ballads, mostly in English. A recording of "Feliz Navidad" blasted through the speakers, too. A Palestinian host welcomed members of Gaza's tiny Christian community, who were permitted to cross through Israel to the West Bank, eliciting whistles and applause.

"My son and I and my husband came for Christmas to see, you know, be right here where it all took place," said Irene Adkins, 63, from Lorain, Ohio, as she sat in a Bethlehem visitor's center. "It feels wonderful."

The celebrations brought a boost of holiday cheer to the area after a difficult year. Israeli-Palestinian peace talks collapsed last spring, and Israel battled Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip during a 50-day war over the summer. Elsewhere in the region, the Middle East's dwindling Christian community has suffered persecution at the hands of Islamic State extremists.

For residents of the Palestinian town of Bethlehem, an independent state is as elusive as ever. The Church of the Nativity, built over the grotto that Christians believe is the site of Jesus' birth, was flanked by the towering Christmas tree and a large poster in Arabic and English that read "All I want for Christmas is justice."

"Our message this Christmas is a message of peace like every year, but what we added this year is that all we want from Christmas is justice. Justice for our people, justice for our case and the right to live like all other people in the world in our independent state without the occupation," said Palestinian Tourism Minister Rula Maayah.

Police and local officials said just 4,500 international tourists visited Bethlehem this year, less than half last year's number. By nightfall, perhaps 2,000 people remained in the square, most of them local Palestinians.

Fadi Kattan, a Palestinian tourism expert, blamed the downturn on the summer war in Gaza.

"Image, image, image," Kattan said. "We're looking at the attack in Gaza affecting the image of this (place) as a destination."

US removes Gambia from trade agreement

DAKAR, Senegal (AP) -- Activists have praised the U.S. government's decision to remove Gambia from a trade agreement in response to human rights abuses, including a law signed in October that imposes life imprisonment for some homosexual acts.

The White House announced Gambia's termination as a beneficiary of the African Growth and Opportunity Act late Tuesday, without specifying a reason.

A spokesman for the U.S. Trade Representative said Wednesday that the decision was made in response to general concerns about human rights in the West African nation, including the anti-gay law.

"The U.S. Trade Representative has been monitoring the human rights situation in The Gambia for the past few years, with deepening concerns about the lack of progress with respect to human rights, rule of law, political pluralism, and the right to due process," Trevor Kincaid said.

President Yahya Jammeh, who assumed power in 1994, is regularly criticized for abuses, including disappearances and executions. He is one of Africa's most vocal anti-gay leaders and has previously threatened to behead sexual minorities found in his country.

Following signing of the anti-gay law in October, security forces carried out a spate of arrests targeting people accused of committing homosexual acts. State media said Monday that three more men were about to be charged.

Local organizations such as the Coalition for Change have praised the U.S. move, as has the U.S.-based Human Rights Campaign, a leading gay rights organization.

"This decision is an important first step in sending a clear signal to President Yahya Jammeh and his associates about their human rights record, and they cannot be allowed to trample on the rights of LGBT Gambians," said Jean Freedberg, deputy director of HRC Global.

South Sudan was also removed from the trade agreement over human rights concerns related to that country's ongoing conflict, Kincaid said.

Islamic State extremists capture Jordanian pilot

AMMAN, Jordan (AP) -- Islamic State militants captured a Jordanian pilot after his warplane crashed in Syria while carrying out airstrikes Wednesday, making him the first foreign military member to fall into the extremists' hands since an international coalition launched its bombing campaign against the group months ago.

Images of the pilot being pulled out of a lake and hustled away by masked jihadis underscored the risks for the U.S. and its Arab and European allies in the air campaign.

The capture - and the potential hostage situation - presented a nightmare scenario for Jordan, which vowed to continue its fight against the group that has overrun large parts of Syria and Iraq and beheaded foreign captives.

The cause of the crash was not immediately known, but the U.S. military insisted the plane was not shot down.

"Evidence clearly indicates that ISIL did not down the aircraft as the terrorist organization is claiming," Central Command said in a statement.

U.S. Army Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III, who is overseeing all coalition military operations in Iraq and Syria, condemned the pilot's capture, saying in a statement: "We will support efforts to ensure his safe recovery and will not tolerate ISIL's attempts to misrepresent or exploit this unfortunate aircraft crash for their own purposes."

A coalition official, who was not authorized to discuss the episode publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity, said the pilot was in an F-16 fighter and was able to eject.

Jordanian Information Minister Mohammad Momani earlier told the AP that the plane was believed to have been shot down.

"It is our expectation that the plane went down because of fire from the ground, but it is difficult to confirm that, with the little information we have," he said.

The Islamic State group is known to have Russian-made Igla anti-aircraft missiles. The shoulder-fired weapon has long been in the Syrian and Iraqi government arsenals; it was used during the 1991 Gulf War by Iraqi forces to bring down a British Tornado jet, for example. More recently, militants in Chechnya have used them to down Russian helicopters.

The warplane went down near the northern Syrian city of Raqqa, the de facto IS capital.

Off The Wall

Man mistakenly sells GF's mattress with cat inside

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) -- When an Oregon man sold his girlfriend's mattress set for $100 because she was moving in with him, little did he realize her cat was hiding inside.

While his girlfriend was at work, Roy Dufek helped strap the mattress and box spring to the top of the buyer's car. When he went back inside his girlfriend's suburban Portland home, Camo the cat was nowhere to be found.

Dufek said it was impossible for the cat to slip outside undetected, because there are three sets of doors in the apartment complex.

After a 20-minute search, Dufek called his girlfriend, Hayley Crews, who told him Camo liked to hide in a hole in the box spring.

Crews had previously taped up the hole and had filled the space under the box spring with boxes. But in preparation for the sale, she removed the boxes and the tape that covered the hole.

"I knew right away what had happened," Crews said. "When the furniture was being hauled out, Camo got scared and that's where he would have hidden."

She said Camo "freezes" in frightening situations and does not meow. Crews raised the 5-year-old feline since he was a kitten, she said. He's an indoor-only cat, and he was her companion - her "fur child" - when she lived alone, she said.

The couple think it's likely the cat scurried out of the box spring when the mattress buyer took it off the car roof in his neighborhood, or he jumped out while the car was moving.

Dufek and Crews have searched the mattress buyer's home and yard, and they've set up an animal trap with food and water in the garage where the buyer stored the mattress. They even rented a thermal camera to search the neighborhood.

Thief of Rudolph statue caught red-handed

GARDENA, Calif. (AP) -- When officers found a stolen Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer statue, they certainly said its shiny nose was glowing.

The 200-pound statue had been pilfered nearly two weeks ago from its perch atop a sign marking an upscale Southern California neighborhood, where a reindeer figure has been a seasonal fixture for half a century.

"It was remounted and lit up as if it was their own Christmas decoration," Los Angeles County sheriff's Sgt. Mark Moffett said after the statue was recovered Monday atop a trailer home in the city of Gardena. The homeowner was arrested.

It wasn't Rudolph's shiny nose but a tip that led authorities 9 miles from the Ranchview neighborhood in the city of Rolling Hills Estates to Gardena.

Meanwhile, with no Rudolph to guide Santa's sleigh on Christmas Eve, residents had quickly mounted a replacement. They say this one will be better secured.

"I can't even believe that we did it in time. It's turned a heartbreak into a heartwarming story," said Korry Taylor, whose husband, Tim, frantically rebuilt the new Rudolph out of wood, using a photo of the stolen one as a blueprint.

OFFBEAT BRIEFS

German police hunt stolen pigeon worth $184,000

BERLIN (AP) -- Police in Germany are looking for a missing pigeon, and any finder could be in line for a 10,000-euro ($12,250) reward. Duesseldorf police said Tuesday that the 6-year-old male homing pigeon, named AS 969, was stolen at some point on Saturday night from a locked aviary in the city's suburbs. They say the light gray bird is valued by its owner at 150,000 euros ($184,000) and police suspect the thief or thieves were "connoisseurs" as it was the most valuable in an aviary full of other homing pigeons.

Diamonds among donations in Salvation Army kettles

BOSTON (AP) -- In Massachusetts, it's not just the treetops that are glistening this holiday season. It's also the jewelry that's being dropped in Salvation Army's red kettles. The charity says donors dropped wedding and engagement rings into a kettle in Weymouth, south of Boston. And a bracelet, diamond ring and diamond pendant were contributed in the central city of Fitchburg. Both donors asked that the items be sold to help the poor and addicted. The latest gifts come after a widow gave her wedding rings in memory of her husband, and another widow redeemed them with a gift of $21,000. Then an Australian woman who recently moved to Boston gave a diamond cross pendant. Salvation Army Major David Davis said Wednesday that the organization is "overwhelmed by all that has taken place."

Ohio township orders 'Zombie Nativity' taken down

CINCINNATI (AP) -- A suburban Cincinnati township ordered a man to kill off his large "Zombie Nativity" scene. Sycamore Township has sent Jasen Dixon two notices of zoning violations. Officials said they received complaints about debris at the home and upon inspection concluded the nativity violates rules on size and placement of yard structures. Dixon was also told to remove debris. He faces legal action if he doesn't comply by Friday. Dixon manages a haunted house attraction and decided to create a zombie nativity, which he considers a holiday decoration. It has a white-eyed creature in the manger where the baby Jesus would be in traditional Christmas nativities. Township administrator Greg Bickford says he could care less about the zombies, but the size of the front-yard structure is not permitted.

Woman reunited with car stolen nearly 30 years ago

SALINAS, Calif. (AP) -- A California woman was reunited with her classic Ford Mustang nearly 30 years after it was stolen, when a man tried to register the muscle car at a Department of Motor Vehicles office. Lynda Alsip said she couldn't ask for a better Christmas present than the return of her forest-green 1967 Mustang, the Monterey County Herald reported Monday. "I never thought I would see it again," she told the Herald, standing in a Salinas tow yard next to her car. "It's like winning the lottery." She bought the car for $800 in 1985 when she was 17 years old. About a year later, it was stolen outside her Salinas apartment complex. Police say the vehicle was found at the Department of Motor Vehicles in Salinas in September when a man tried to register the car he had for 23 years. Authorities were investigating whether the man knew it was stolen.

Science & Technology

Who hacked Sony becomes Internet's new mystery

LOS ANGELES (AP) -- Everyone has a theory about who really hacked Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc.

Despite President Barack Obama's conclusion that North Korea was the culprit, the Internet's newest game of whodunit continues. Top theories include disgruntled Sony insiders, hired hackers, other foreign governments or Internet hooligans. Even some experts are undecided, with questions about why the communist state would steal and leak gigabytes of data, email threats to some Sony employees and their families and then threaten moviegoers who planned to watch "The Interview" on Christmas.

"Somebody's done it. And right now this knowledge is known to God and whoever did it," said Martin Libicki, a cyber security expert at RAND in Arlington, Virginia, who thinks it probably was North Korea. "So we gather up a lot of evidence, and the evidence that the FBI has shown so far doesn't allow one to distinguish between somebody who is North Korea and somebody who wants to look like North Korea."

Perhaps the only point of agreement among those guessing is that even the most dramatic cybercrimes can be really, really hard to solve convincingly. When corporations are breached, investigators seldom focus on attributing the crime because their priority is assessing damage and preventing it from happening again.

"Attribution is a very hard game to play," said Mike Fey, president of security company Blue Coat Systems Inc. and former chief technology officer at McAfee Inc. "Like any criminal activity, how they get away with it is a very early step in the planning process, and framing another organization or individual is a great way to get away with something.

Fey added: "If they're smart enough and capable enough to commit a high profile attack, they're very often smart enough and capable enough to masquerade as someone else. It can be very difficult to find that true smoking gun."

In a report earlier this month, Fey's company described a malicious software tool called Inception, in which attackers suggested a link to China, used home routers in South Korea, included comments in Hindi, with text in Arabic, the words "God-Save-The-Queen" in another string, and used other techniques to show links to the United States, Ukraine or Russia.

Unlike crimes in the physical world, forensic investigators in the cyber world can't dust for fingerprints or corroborate evidence by interviewing suspects. In prior closed-book cases, cyber criminals caught bragging online were only charged after evidence was found on their hard drives.

"The NSA (National Security Agency) has penetrated a lot of computers, but until Ed Snowden came around, nobody was certain because the NSA has the world's best operational security. They know how to cover their tracks and fingerprints very well," Libicki said.

After Sony was hacked, investigators analyzed network logs, the hacking tool and the remains of their crippled network. The investigation began after the attackers announced themselves and wiped the systems by crippling Sony's hard drives. Security professionals discovered that the hackers had been conducting surveillance on it since the spring. And if not for the theatrics of the Guardians of Peace, as the hackers call themselves, the breach could have easily continued for months without knowledge of the compromise.

Because North Korea is so isolated and its Internet infrastructure is not directly connected to the outside world, it's more difficult to trace attacks originating there. North Korea has vehemently denied that it was responsible for the attack.

TECH Q & A

Fixing a PC zapped during a power failure

By STEVE ALEXANDER
STAR TRIBUNE (MINNEAPOLIS)

Q: My daughter's Windows 7 PC was left on during a power outage, and since then we haven't been able to start it up properly. We get the error messages "group policy client service failed the logon" and "access is denied."

I couldn't fix the problem using the repair tools that are available at the "C:" prompt midway through start-up. And I can't reload Windows, because we don't have the original installation disk, although we do have two disks that we made when we got the PC. Is there a solution? If not, can I install a different operating system, such as Linux, on the PC?

A: The disks you made when the computer was new probably contain system repair software. Insert one of them in the DVD drive and reboot the PC. If the PC starts up, you should get a menu that includes several options to fix Windows, including self-explanatory "start-up repair," "system restore" (which returns the PC's settings to the way they were on an earlier date), and "memory diagnostic," which will show you if the PC has memory errors.

If that doesn't work, you could buy a new copy of Windows 7 for about $100. All data and programs on the PC would be erased by loading a new copy of Windows.

Alternatively, you could overwrite Windows 7 with Ubuntu, a version of the free Linux operating system. Again, everything on the PC will be erased. If you have access to another PC, go to Ubuntu.com, click the "desktop" tab to download the free Ubuntu, then burn it to a CD disc. If you don't have another PC available, you can buy Ubuntu CD at a computer store for less than $10.

Q: My laptop screen was smashed against something when I took an airline trip, and the screen has at least one major crack in it. I can't access my files because I can't see anything. Can this be repaired?

A: Yes, replacing a cracked laptop screen is one of the most common computer repairs. A computer shop typically charges about $120 for parts and labor. It's your call whether the PC is worth repairing at that price, because you could buy a new laptop for about $300.

You can save money by replacing the screen yourself. Online stores typically sell a laptop screen for $50 to $75 plus shipping (see tinyurl.com/ywenq2 or tinyurl.com/yg5w8l9). You can find step-by-step screen replacement instructions at tinyurl.com/nlyl5lo.

Reminder: Some readers have been unsure how to use the short-form Web addresses used in this column, called TinyURLs. The TinyURLs are nicknames for much longer website addresses. You should type them into the address line of your Web browser, which is the line that tells you which website you are currently visiting. Because TinyURLs aren't real website names, you can't search for them with Google.

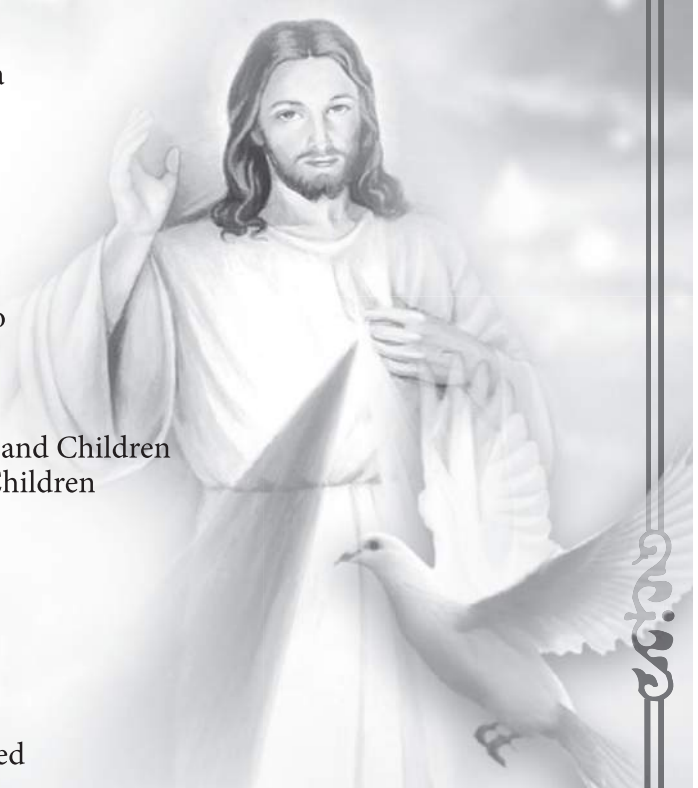
Steve Alexander covers technology for the Minneapolis Star Tribune. Readers may write to him at Tech Q&A, 425 Portland Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn. 55488-0002; email: steve.j.alexander@gmail.com. Please include a full name, city and phone number.

DEATH & FUNERAL ANNOUNCEMENT

In Loving Memory of

†Christopher S. Santos

April 10, 1990 - December 19, 2014



Son	:	Ezel Karter – Santos
Parents	:	Rosalina Santos – Magofna
		Antonio C. Magofna
		Ramon Ch Santos
		Tess G. Santos
Grandmother	:	Antonia Aguon Santos
Godparents	:	Almondo Ch. Santos
		Annie B. Santos
		David Anthony M. Hosono
		Ma. Rosario Dela Torre

Brothers , Sisters and In laws:
Chayse Raymond Santos & Jessica Macaranas and Children
Chasmyn Santos & David John Apatang and Children
Mary Grace Santos & Joel Matagolai
Margieray Santos
Amber-Lynn Santos Quinata
Almondo Franco Santos
Tonnya Lyn Santos Magofna
Catalina Keona Cabrera

Godchildren : Clarence Damian P. Ruluked
David John S. Apatang

	Mass Schedule			Rosary Schedule
Wednesday :	December 24	5:00AM	-	12:00PM
Thursday :	December 25	-	-	12:00PM
Friday :	December 26	6:00PM	-	07:00PM
Saturday :	December 27	6:00PM	-	07:00PM
Sunday :	December 28	8:00AM	-	07:00PM

Funeral Services will be held on Monday, December 29, 2014. His remains will be escorted from Nuestra Senora Dela Paz Memorial Chapel at 7:30 a.m. to Kristo Rai Church. Responso Service will be 8:00 a.m. followed by Holy Rosary.

Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. followed by Interment Service at Sanctuario PAX Memorial Gardens in Kagman where he will be at a peaceful rest.

Please join us in Prayers,

The Family

Life & Style

Streaming release of 'Interview' test for industry

ATLANTA (AP) -- Sony's "The Interview" has been a hacking target, a punchline and a political lightning rod. Now, with its release online at the same time it debuts in theaters, it has a new role: a test for a new kind of movie release.

"The Interview" stars Seth Rogen and James Franco as journalists tasked by the CIA with killing North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. Its Christmas Day release was canceled by Sony after threats of violence by hackers linked to North Korea. But after an outcry, the release was reinstated in some independent theaters and now, through a few online video services.

Although the circumstances surrounding "The Interview" are unprecedented, experts say the release will be closely watched to see how moviegoers and theater chains react to a simultaneous debut. It's a challenge to the longstanding practice of "windowing" - opening a movie first in theaters to maximize box-office revenue before making the movie available in other stages of home video, streaming and television.

"I can't say that this is the future," said Jeff Bock, senior box office analyst for Exhibitor Relations Co. "For this film, in particular, it works because of the saga that goes along with it. But it's nice to have a film we can actually use as a guinea pig for a video-on-demand release."

Sony released "The Interview" Wednesday on a variety of digital platforms - Google Play, YouTube Movies, Microsoft's Xbox Video and a separate Sony website. It costs $5.99 to rent for 48 hours and $14.99 to purchase. It also will open in more than 300 smaller theaters on Thursday, though major chains are still holding out.

This Wed., Dec. 17, 2014 photo shows a movie poster for the movie "The Interview" on display outside the AMC Glendora 12 movie theater, in Glendora, Calif.

AP

Carrying "The Interview" marks another step in Google's efforts to establish YouTube as an entertainment hub that features major movies and trendy musical videos - not just cute clips of kitties. Google, though, primarily is providing outlets for the movie because it considers itself to be a guardian of free speech.

Decisions by Google and Microsoft to show the movie could open their sites to hacking. Microsoft reported technical problems with its Xbox sign-in system Wednesday, though it wasn't known whether it was the result of hacking. Microsoft services appeared back to normal by Wednesday night. Microsoft declined comment.

Online availability of "The Interview" comes as more people are choosing to stream video online, largely because of YouTube, Hulu and Netflix, which has been phasing out its original DVD-by-mail business over the past four years. During that time, the number of Netflix subscribers in the U.S. has nearly doubled to about 40 million in a reflection of Internet video's growing popularity.

Nonetheless, releasing a major motion picture in theaters and online simultaneously - known as a "day-and-date" release - has never been done by a major studio with a mainstream movie like "The Interview." It's been limited to some smaller indie and foreign movies. The upcoming "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" sequel will be released on Netflix and Imax theaters on the same day, but that isn't a studio production, despite the involvement of the Weinstein Co.

Theater chains have been trying to preserve the traditional theatrical window. Regal Cinemas and Cinemark, for example, declined to screen Warner Bros.' day-and-date release "Veronica Mars" earlier this year. Warner Bros. instead rented from AMC Theaters most of the 270 screens the movie played in while it was also released on VOD.

This time, however, the four major theater chains can't really object, analysts said, as they all declined to show "The Interview," leaving Sony little choice.

"This isn't being done because Sony wants to do it regularly, but rather out of necessity prompted by the exhibitor boycott," Wedbush Securities analyst Michael Pachter said. "The only guys showing it are independent chains."

With a modest budget of about $40 million, "The Interview" had been predicted to gross about $30 million in its opening weekend. Bock estimates Sony could gross just a fraction of that - $3 million to $4 million - at this box office this weekend. As for streaming, Bock said the $5.99 price for rental is much lower than regular theater tickets, and that could drive demand. But Sony isn't likely to make up all of its costs, including the tens of millions in marketing costs already incurred.

A best-case scenario for a video-on-demand release is the thriller "Snowpiercer," which debuted on video on demand about two weeks after its theatrical release. It made nearly $11 million on VOD, more than double its theatrical revenue, and is considered one of the most successful VOD releases so far.

If "The Interview" agreement is similar to other digital video deals, Google and Microsoft will get a 30 percent commission on all rentals and purchases of the movies made through their services. Yet even if the movie were to be wildly successful and generate $100 million in video-on-demand revenue, that would leave about $30 million for Google and Microsoft to divide - hardly anything for two of the world's most profitable companies. For instance, Google is expected to bring in revenue of about $66 billion this year, or about $30 million every four hours.

SIDEBAR

North Korea: No 'physical reaction' to new film

UNITED NATIONS (AP)— North Korea says it likely will have no "physical reaction," just condemnation, to the release of the comedy film "The Interview," which depicts the assassination of leader Kim Jong Un.

A North Korea diplomat to the United Nations told The Associated Press on Wednesday that his country opposes the film's release online and in over 300 U.S. theaters this week.

The film was briefly shelved after a devastating hacking attack on Sony Pictures that the United States has blamed on North Korea.

But diplomat Kim Song said his country has no relation to the hacking and can prove it. He also expressed frustration that the U.S. refused North Korea's offer of a joint investigation.

He called the film an "unpardonable mockery of our sovereignty and dignity of our supreme leader."

REGAL CINEMAS
Bargain Shows ( ) ★Pass/Discount Restrictions Apply
SAIPAN MEGAPLEX 7
Near Joeten Superstore in San Jose MP

THE GAMBLER [CC,DV] (R)
Fri. - Sat.(115 PM 415 PM) 1005 PM
Sun. - Thu.(115 PM 415 PM) 725 PM

UNBROKEN [CC,DV] (PG-13)
Fri. - Sat.(100 410) 720 1030
Sun. - Thu.(100 PM 410 PM) 720 PM

ANNIE [CC,DV] (PG)
Fri. - Sat.(145 430) 715 1000
Sun. - Thu.(145 PM 430 PM) 715 PM

NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM: SECRET OF THE TOMB [CC,DV] (PG)
Fri. - Sat.(215 445) 730 1010
Sun. - Thu.(215 PM 445 PM) 730 PM

HOBBIT: THE BATTLE OF THE FIVE ARMIES [CC,DV] (PG-13)
Fri. - Sat.(1230 PM) 1015 PM
Sun. - Thu.(1230 PM)

HOBBIT: THE BATTLE OF THE FIVE ARMIES 3D [CC,DV] (PG-13)
Fri. - Thu.(345 PM) 700 PM

EXODUS: GODS AND KINGS [CC,DV] (PG-13)
Fri. - Sat.(1240 PM) 1025 PM
Sun. - Thu.(1240 PM)

EXODUS: GODS AND KINGS 3D [CC,DV] (PG-13)
Fri. - Thu.(355 PM) 710 PM

THE PENGUINS OF MADAGASCAR [CC,DV] (PG)
Fri. - Sat.(425 PM) 940 PM
Sun. - Thu.(425 PM)

BIG HERO 6 [CC,DV] (PG)
Fri. - Thu.(150 PM) 705 PM

Times For 12/26 - 01/01 www.REGmovies.com

Court denies Polanski's motion to dismiss 1977 sex case

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Roman Polanski lost his latest bid to have a California court dismiss his 1977 sex case when a judge rejected a motion for a new hearing.

A nine-page order issued Tuesday by Superior Court Judge James Brandlin states that Polanski's claims of judicial misconduct cannot be addressed because he remains a fugitive outside the country after pleading guilty to unlawful sex with a minor in 1977.

Polanski's lawyers have sought a public evidentiary hearing for the case, claiming a judge who handled the matter in 2008 and 2009 committed misconduct by failing to properly consider a dismissal motion due to pressure from a presiding judge.

Bart Dalton, an attorney for Polanski, said he had not yet seen the order and could not comment.

Brandlin's order states Polanski has other options in his latest push to dismiss the case, including returning to California to address his claims.

In a 1977 deal with prosecutors, the Oscar-winning director pleaded guilty to one count of statutory rape for having sex with a 13-year-old girl during a photo shoot in Los Angeles.

Polanski was ordered to undergo a psychiatric study at the state prison in Chino, where he served 42 days.

The prosecutor and Polanski's attorney have said they understood from a private conversation with the judge handling the case that the time in the prison would serve as Polanski's punishment.

However, lawyers for the Polish-born director said the judge later reneged on the agreement and suggested Polanski would go back to prison. Polanski then fled to France.

Polanski sought a dismissal of the case in 2008, but his motion was denied in a ruling that was upheld by an appellate court.

Several efforts to extradite Polanski to California have failed.

Polanski was accepting an award in 2009 in Switzerland, where he has a home, when he was arrested and served 290 days — first in jail and then under house arrest — before Swiss authorities rejected a U.S. request to extradite him and declared he could travel to Switzerland anytime he wanted.

In October of this year, Polanski, 81, attended the opening of the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw before traveling to Krakow, his childhood city. Polish authorities questioned him there in response to a U.S. request but refused to arrest him.

Polanski's attorneys have said the latest extradition request neglected to say the director had served 42 days of court-ordered prison time in 1977.

"The DA's deliberate omission in its letter was plainly calculated to deceive the Polish government into believing that Polanski is 'extraditable' under the extradition treaty between the United States and Poland, when, in fact, he is not," the filing said.

Polanski won an Academy Award for best director for his 2002 film "The Pianist" and was nominated for 1974's "Chinatown" and 1979's "Tess."

Mark Wahlberg rolls the dice with new type of role

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Mark Wahlberg admits he's not Hollywood's go-to guy for teacher roles.

In "The Gambler," out on Christmas Day, he plays the brilliant but troubled English professor Jim Bennett. The role gave Wahlberg particular anxiety.

The 43-year-old actor-producer dropped out of school after the eighth grade, and he only recently went back to get his diploma.

"As much as (director) Rupert (Wyatt) wanted me to transform physically, to me, being a believable literary professor was the most important challenge," said Wahlberg. "These parts don't come my way that often."

To prepare, he visited lectures at UCLA and USC and watched videos of the late David Foster Wallace. One particular lecture on "Beowulf" stood out as the most memorable for its energy and the way UCLA students responded.

He also asked some of the professors to read the script with him. Screenwriter William Monahan's language "is so different. Having these pretty uptight literary professors read it was hilarious," he laughed.

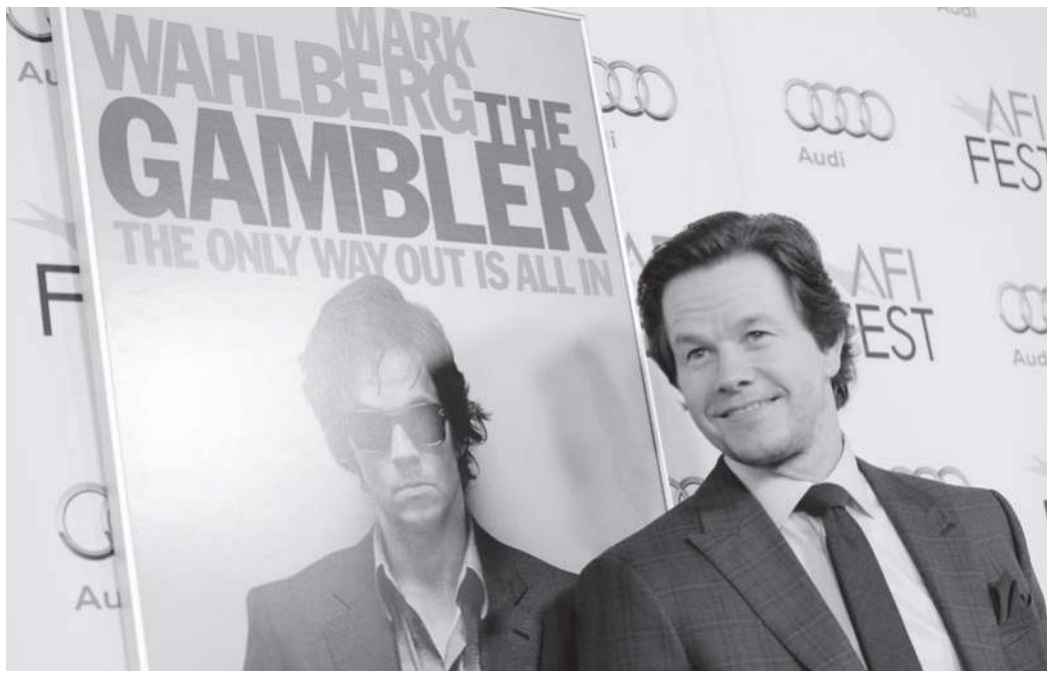
Eventually he came to a sort of peace with the fact that performing a lecture in front of students isn't all that different from performing for a camera, and he was set.

"The Gambler," a remake of a 1974 Karel Reisz film starring James Caan, is a bit of a passion project for Wahlberg. He'd seen the original as a kid with his father, but it wasn't until he read Monahan's update of the slow-burning thriller about a privileged professor who's gotten in over his head with gambling debts that he knew this was something special.

Monahan and Wahlberg have a long-standing and fruitful professional relationship going back to "The Departed," for which Wahlberg received his first Oscar nomination. (Monahan won for his adapted screenplay.) Wahlberg trusts his scripts and his judgment. The two recently wrapped the psychological thriller "Mojave," which Monahan also directed, and Monahan is writing the script for a new project, "American Desperado."

For Wahlberg, stepping into the self-destructive shoes of a mostly despicable guy was the perfect change of pace after "Transformers: Age of Extinction."

His character, Jim, is "trying to be the underdog as opposed to the underdog trying to do the impossible," he said.



AP
In this Nov. 10, 2014 file photo, Mark Wahlberg, star and producer of "The Gambler," poses at the premiere of the film at AFI Fest 2014, in Los Angeles.

"At one point we were thinking about making him more likable and giving him more redeeming qualities, but we felt that would take away from who he really was and how we really interpreted the material," explained Wahlberg. "But, we also didn't want to make it so dark that people weren't willing to want to see it. We were never going to make him the most likable guy in the world, but at least people should find him interesting enough that they would want to go on the journey with him."

It's quite a journey to the bottom as Jim borrows and gambles away his and others' money. To prepare for that aspect, Wahlberg and Wyatt went to gambling dens, "high-stakes private poker games" and college sporting events.

Beyond the excitement of making the movie and stretching as an actor, Wahlberg is a businessman. Art and commerce are tied together in how he thinks about the films and projects he's producing, and he's not shy to discuss everything from tax incentives to release strategies.

Acclaimed film 'Selma' disappoints LBJ historian

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—The widely acclaimed movie "Selma" about the 1965 Civil Rights movement has disappointed at least one moviegoer: a leading historian of President Lyndon B. Johnson.

The director of the LBJ Presidential Library in Austin, which hosted a major civil rights summit this year that was headlined by four U.S. presidents, said the film that opens in theaters Thursday incorrectly portrays Johnson as an obstructionist to the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

"Selma" is based on the 1965 marches from the Alabama cities of Selma to Montgomery that were led by King. At the time, marchers were calling for voting rights.

LBJ Library Director Mark Updegrove said the film unfairly casts Johnson as a sort of composite character who represents the obstacles blacks faced in getting civil rights laws passed. What history shows, Updegrove said, is that Johnson and King had a partnership.

He said Johnson and King had disagreements but not like the film suggests. Updegrove called the portrayal unfortunate given the current climate following the deaths of unarmed black men at the hands of police.

"When racial tension is so high, it does no good to suggest that the president of the U.S. himself stood in the way of progress a half-century ago. It flies in the face of history," Updegrove said.

A spokeswoman for Paramount Pictures, the studio that released the film, did not immediately return messages for comment Wednesday.

"Selma" is nominated for four Golden Globe awards, including best picture for a drama and best director.

Katt Williams pleads not guilty in robbery case

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Katt Williams has pleaded not guilty to a robbery charge filed after a photographer accused the comedian of stealing her camera.

District attorney's spokeswoman Shiara Davila-Morales said Williams entered the plea on Wednesday and was ordered to return to court on Feb. 3 for a scheduling hearing.

Williams was charged along with Death Row Records founder Suge Knight with taking the camera as the photographer tried to take a picture in Beverly Hills on Sept. 5. Knight has also pleaded not guilty to the charge.

The 43-year-old Williams has starred in several comedy specials and appeared in films. He could face up to seven years in prison if convicted.

Jackie Chan expresses shame over son's drug charge

BEIJING (AP)—Hong Kong action film star Jackie Chan said he feels shame for his son, who has been indicted by Beijing prosecutors on a drug charge and could be jailed for up to three years.

The remarks, reported Wednesday by China's official Xinhua News Agency, came two days after authorities announced the indictment against Jaycee Chan, 32, who is charged with sheltering others to use drugs.

The scandal has been particularly embarrassing for Jackie Chan, who was named by Beijing as an anti-drug ambassador in 2009.

Jackie Chan, who sits on China's top national political advisory panel — the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference — told Xinhua that he did not use his connections to interfere with the case and that he hopes his singer-actor son will become an anti-drug ambassador when he is released.

Beijing police detained the younger Chan at his Beijing apartment in August along with Taiwanese movie star Ko Kai. Police said Chan and Ko both tested positive for marijuana and admitted using the drug, and that 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of it were taken from Chan's home.

Suicidal Internet 'friend' needs professional help

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR ABBY: I'm a grad student who enjoys perusing social networks for jokes and stuff. The other day I came across a post from someone who said he wanted to kill himself. Naturally, I kind of freaked out.

I contacted the person to ask him not to and thankfully he didn't. Normally I don't do the whole "Internet friend" thing, but we decided to keep chatting and since then we have become fast friends. I'm not sure how to help this person, though.

He is in the military and fears losing his job if he seeks help. I don't want to pressure him into seeing a professional, since part of what's causing his anxiety is being ordered around constantly, but I don't want him to hurt himself. I know I can't save this person; I can only walk alongside while he figures it all out, but I don't want him to suffer. Please tell me what to do!

LONG-DISTANCE FRIEND

DEAR LONG-DISTANCE FRIEND: I'll try. Are you SURE this person is who he purports to be? Suicidal people don't usually broadcast it to strangers they meet on the Internet. When you say he's afraid that if he seeks professional help he'll lose his job, is he intending to make a career in the military? If the answer is yes, and he doesn't like "being ordered around constantly," he has chosen the wrong career.

You should tell this individual that it's essential he talk to someone about his suicidal impulses who has the training to actually help him with his suffering (your word). If you encourage him to lean on you, it will only prolong his procrastination about standing on his own two feet. For BOTH your sakes, deliver your message clearly and back away. Because you have known each other for such a short time, it shouldn't be too traumatic.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I will celebrate our 50th anniversary soon. One hundred and twenty-five invitations were sent and 80 people have responded that they will be attending. I have wondered about the 45 invitees who didn't respond one way or the other.

Today I was told there's a new rule of etiquette regarding the RSVP on an invitation -- that one doesn't have to respond unless one is attending the function. Is this true? Am I out of step with the current social culture?

I am more than aware that it has changed -- and would debate that it probably hasn't changed for the better with regard to social courtesy. So, in planning any function that entails food, hotel rooms, etc., am I to assume no response is a negative one?

QUESTIONING IN THE SOUTHEAST

DEAR QUESTIONING: You are not out of step. There is no "new rule," unless the invitation specifies "regrets only." RSVP still means what it always has: "Repondez s'il vous plait." That's French for "Please respond." It doesn't mean to respond only if you plan on being there. Polite people take note of the phone number at the bottom of the invitation, or the little card included with it, and accept or decline.

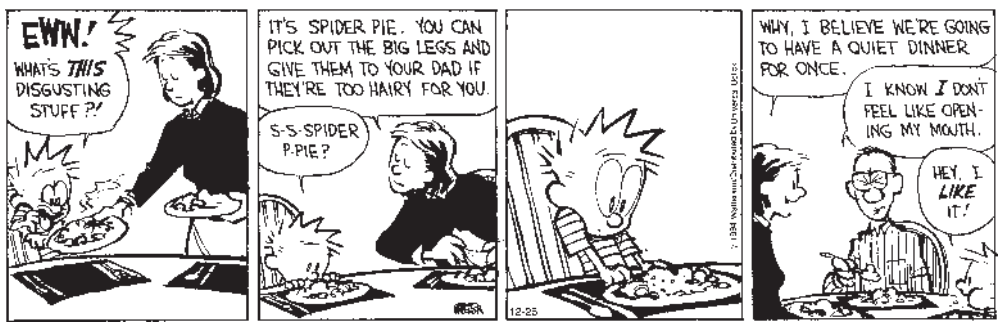
While it's safe to assume that the individuals you didn't hear from won't be coming, it's also a clue that they may not have been taught good manners.

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

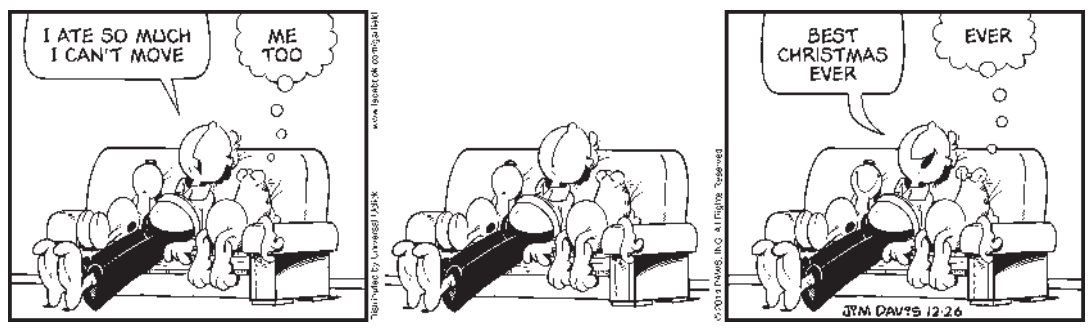
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


EWW! WHAT'S THIS DISGUSTING STUFF?!
IT'S SPIDER PIE. YOU CAN PICK OUT THE BIG LEGS AND GIVE THEM TO YOUR DAD IF THEY'RE TOO HAIRY FOR YOU.
S-S-SPIDER P-PIE?
WHY, I BELIEVE WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A QUIET DINNER FOR ONCE.
I KNOW I DON'T FEEL LIKE OPENING MY MOUTH.
HEY, I LIKE IT!
12-25

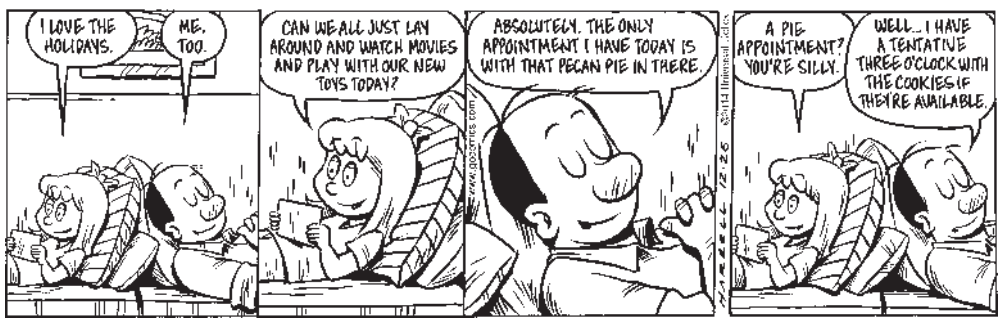
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


I LOVE THE HOLIDAYS.
ME, TOO.
CAN WE ALL JUST LAY AROUND AND WATCH MOVIES AND PLAY WITH OUR NEW TOYS TODAY?
ABSOLUTELY. THE ONLY APPOINTMENT I HAVE TODAY IS WITH THAT PECAN PIE IN THERE.
A PIE APPOINTMENT? YOU'RE SILLY.
WELL... I HAVE A TENTATIVE THREE O'CLOCK WITH THE COOKIES IF THEY'RE AVAILABLE.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

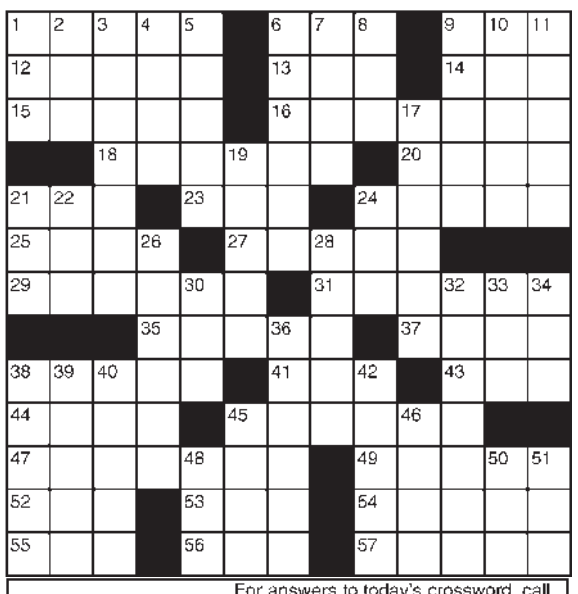
ACROSS
1 Went on all fours
6 Uncultured
9 Ozone depleter, for short
12 Boggy backwater
13 Locale of Anytown
14 Hasten
15 Relieve
16 Arcade game
18 Employers
20 Hot dog holder
21 Bake sale org.
23 Had lunch
24 Reacts to yeast
25 Kansas city
27 Invited
29 "The — Girls"
31 Slow passage
35 "Star Wars" baddie
37 Calm before the storm
38 No liability
41 Old hand
43 Chic, to Austin Powers
44 Antelope's playmate
45 Render senseless
47 Eccentric
49 Memorize
52 Suitcase
53 Susan of "L.A. Law"
54 Nome dome home
55 Away from WSW
56 Possess
57 Lost color

DOWN
1 "Survivor" airer
2 Knock
3 Evaluate visually
4 Horseback game
5 Oklahoma city
6 Money of India
7 Unrepaired
8 Ashen
9 Complete disorder
10 Grenoble girl
11 Honeycomb compartments
17 Wedding-related
19 Rise
21 Glutton
22 Additionally
24 Roulette bet
26 "How, when or where" word
28 Actress Black
30 Corrode
32 Sweet sphere
33 Worldwide workers' org.
34 Antiquated
36 Writer Waugh
38 Photoshop maker
39 Auto style
40 Marsh plant
42 Dutch bloom
45 Huffed and puffed
46 Ginormous
48 Commotion
50 Shad product
51 Affirmative action?

Solution time: 25 mins.

W	A	N	D		E	B	B		S	T	O	W
A	L	E	E		M	A	O		H	U	G	O
D	O	W	N	T	U	R	N		A	R	E	A
S	E	T	T	O			D	A	W	N	E	D
			A	T	O	M		U	N	O		
A	W	O	L		W	O	U	K		V	A	T
G	O	V		P	E	N	N	S		E	V	E
E	W	E		U	S	E	D		B	R	E	D
			R	A	M		Y	O	R	E		
S	I	T	U	P	S			Y	A	I	T	A
O	D	O	R		T	O	N	E	D	O	W	N
J	L	N	A		A	P	E		L	O	I	N
P	E	E	L		B	A	T		E	T	N	A

Wednesday's answer 12-26



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Beth Behrs, 29; Chris Daughtry, 35; Jared Leto, 43; David Sedaris, 58.

Happy Birthday: Let go of past regrets and move forward in a positive and progressive manner. Not everything you remember is factual, and in some cases your imagination has given you a false impression of the way things used to be. Embrace new beginnings enthusiastically and strive to live in the moment and your future will become filled with joy. Your numbers are 4, 15, 21, 26, 32, 35, 47.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Reconnecting with past colleagues or sharing information with someone you find inspiring and innovative will help you make decisions regarding your future. Don't let your current professional situation get you down. Plan your strategy for the new year. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Travel plans and visiting friends or relatives will add to your enjoyment and give you a better sense of a situation unfolding in your family or community. Someone will offer you something unusual that will encourage you in the new year. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You can make positive changes at home that will help you head into the upcoming year feeling comfortable about making any professional alterations that are scheduled. Don't be fooled by emotional blackmail. Do your own thing. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): If you let daydreaming take over, it will lead to a surprising revelation regarding your future. Finding a way to make your living doing something you enjoy will send you down a favorable path. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Get together with friends, or travel to places that promise excitement or a different perspective on the way you live. You can stabilize your home and personal relationships by checking out options that offer something for everyone you love. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Take time to enjoy friends or to do something that adds to your comfort or personal improvement. Love is on the rise and a romantic gesture can help bring you and someone special closer together. An unusual living arrangement is apparent. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): You'll do better visiting friends than sticking around home. Added responsibilities, complaints and demands can be expected if you spend the day with those you live with. Break away from situations that are confining, and do something that brings you pleasure. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Spend time fleshing out an idea you have. Someone you love will help you find a simple answer to a complex problem. Change is upon you, but sticking to moderation, fair play and practicality will be what leads to your success. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Emotional disappointment is apparent. Stick to the truth and refuse to let anyone manipulate you. Make positive changes at home or make travel plans that will give you greater incentive to tidy up loose ends before you leave. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Taking time off work will give you a chance to rethink what you are doing and how you can make improvements. An unusual job prospect will catch your eye. Don't hesitate to look into what it entails. Positive change is ahead of you. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Don't overreact to personal situations going on between you and a partner. Focus on the changes you can make to improve your current financial or professional position. Strive to be happier with who you are and what you do. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Excitement will mount regarding something you want to pursue. Ask for favors and you will get whatever help you need. Plan to get together with people you have worked with in the past or haven't seen in a long time. Love is highlighted. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are imaginative and adventuresome. You are changeable and intuitive.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		6		7		1		
9			2	6	5			4
		4		5		3		
2		8				9		6
		7		8		2		
6			9	1	7			2
		1		4		8		

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 12/26

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Wednesday's SUDOKU Answer

1	4	7	5	8	3	9	2	6
5	6	9	2	1	7	3	4	8
2	3	8	9	4	6	5	7	1
4	8	6	1	5	2	7	9	3
3	7	1	6	9	4	8	5	2
9	5	2	7	3	8	6	1	4
6	9	5	8	2	1	4	3	7
7	1	4	3	6	5	2	8	9
8	2	3	4	7	9	1	6	5

Difficulty Level ★★★ 12/25

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

ANTI-AGING CREAM **Solution: 8 letters**

S	P	E	E	L	S	C	X	O	T	O	B	N	H	H
E	E	R	F	S	S	E	R	T	S	O	A	I	Y	E
L	A	I	C	A	F	L	H	T	O	T	M	A	D	A
C	C	R	K	R	O	L	E	S	U	M	L	C	R	L
S	G	S	O	T	E	S	T	R	U	U	G	I	A	I
U	A	N	I	U	T	P	A	N	R	R	S	N	T	N
M	O	O	I	E	T	L	E	O	E	E	B	A	I	G
S	N	L	D	N	B	I	N	E	R	L	L	M	N	S
T	U	A	C	A	O	I	N	U	D	A	O	I	G	R
C	F	R	S	R	C	T	M	E	G	X	N	D	R	A
A	H	E	F	A	E	S	Y	I	T	E	I	E	A	C
R	A	N	C	A	E	A	N	P	L	S	T	O	P	S
T	N	I	A	L	C	G	M	G	E	A	E	E	P	K
X	D	F	L	I	F	E	N	S	W	S	R	R	L	I
E	S	E	V	L	O	S	S	I	D	A	I	L	Y	N

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Last Wednesday's Answer: Baking

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COMMONWEALTH CASINO COMMISSION

PO Box 500135 Saipan MP 96950

EXAMINATION ANNOUNCEMENT NO. CCC-14-001
OPENING DATE: 12/24/14
CLOSING DATE: 01/07/15

This examination is for the purpose of developing an Open Competitive and Promotional Eligibility list. It is the policy of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands that the personnel system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

POSITION AND SALARY: ***EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR***

Salary is commensurate with qualifications and experience.

LOCATION: Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

POSITION SUMMARY
The Executive Director is responsible for the overall administration of the Commonwealth Casino Commission (the "Commission" or "CCC"). The Executive Director ensures that the Commission exercises its authority in compliance with Public Law 18-56 and other Commonwealth laws, Agreements, Rules and Regulations. He/She will be responsible for directing and managing the regulatory activities of the Commission to ensure the gaming industry performs in compliance with the provisions of the Commonwealth Casino Act of 2014 (Public Law 18-56) as well as industry best practices. The Executive Director reports to and is supervised by the Commission.

Note: This job posting is intended to describe the general nature and level of work to be performed by the assigned person. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, skills or working conditions.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION
Pursuant to CNMI Public Law 18-56 § 2315
- A Bachelor's Degree from a United States accredited educational institution or equivalent
- Five (5) years work experience in professional, administrative or management in government or private sectors
- Good ethical and moral character
- Must posses a clean criminal history and must not have been convicted of any crime in any jurisdiction of the United States, or any foreign country carrying a minimum sentence of imprisonment of more than six months, excepting traffic offence
- Must not have any interest, directly or indirectly, in any business under the jurisdiction of the Commission

MINIMUM BACKGROUND REQUIREMENTS
Applicant must submit to and pass background screen, including, but not limited to drug and criminal record investigation. Certain information discovered could result in ineligibility for employment with the Commonwealth Casino Commission. The Commission will require a personal financial disclosure prior to making a final decision.

Applicant must be a US Citizen or US Permanent Resident. CNMI Government Excepted Service benefits will apply.

INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS SHOULD REQUEST A COPY OF THE COMPLETE JOB DESCRIPTION.

CONTACT PERSON:
Ruth Ann P. Sakisat
Commonwealth Casino Commission
C/O The Office of the Governor, 1st Floor
PO Box 500135
Saipan MP 96950
(670) 237-2214

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LeBron set for Christmas homecoming against Heat

AP

In this June 21, 2012, file photo, Miami Heat small forward LeBron James (6) and shooting guard Dwyane Wade embrace in the final moments of the second half at Game 5 of the NBA finals basketball series in Miami. The Heat won, 121-106, to become the NBA Champions.

MIAMI (AP)—LeBron James doesn't have any apprehension for this homecoming.

There's nothing to fear, no real worries about his safety, unlike what awaited him the last time he had one of these return games. Then again, this might not even classify as a homecoming - because, it turns out, Miami was never truly his home, just a place he called home for four years while playing with the Heat.

He came. He won. He left.

On Thursday, James returns to face the Heat, the team that turned him from a superstar to a two-time NBA champion superstar. And as he and the Cleveland Cavaliers prepare for what will certainly be an emotional Christmas visit, James expects to be flooded with positive vibes.

"To say I haven't thought about going back, I would be lying," James said in Cleveland on Tuesday night after he and the Cavaliers beat Minnesota. "It's going to be great to be back in that building around those unbelievable fans and the memories will definitely come back, being a part of the organization for four years."

For their part, the Heat insist that they're looking forward to the reunion.

It goes without saying that some in the organization were angry when James left this past summer, in large part because of how long it took him to tell Miami that he would not be returning. But the building has hardly been scrubbed of reminders: Heat coach Erik Spoelstra still has photos of James in his office, and huge prints of some of his most memorable moments still adorn the walls of "Championship Alley" —the hallway leading from the Miami locker room.

James remains in contact with some Heat players, and his close friendship with Dwyane Wade continues.

"He made the right decision. He went home," Wade said Wednesday. "You can't say nothing about that decision when someone decides to go home."

The homecoming drama was so different four years ago.

When James returned to Cleveland on Dec. 2, 2010, for the first time after signing as a free agent with Miami, the city that adopted the Akron native as one of its own turned on him. He was booed incessantly by Cavs fans who felt that he had betrayed them despite seven great seasons.

The Heat won that night. And they knew they would never face an atmosphere that daunting again.

"It was just us," James said.

James has spent the past few days downplaying his return to South Florida, but the four-time MVP has found himself reminiscing about what he accomplished alongside Wade, Udonis Haslem, Chris Bosh, Mario Chalmers and those former Heat teammates who remain in Miami.

They became a family, and for James, family is everything.

"I'm one person who understands being home, being able to stay home and making sacrifices to be home," said Haslem, a Miami native who has spent his entire NBA career there despite the chance to make more elsewhere. "I've done it my whole career and I can't fault him for that. We had a great four years together, we had a lot of success together and we'll continue to be friends."

And remember, they've already played once—at Brazil, in the preseason.

"We already played each other," Wade said. "The NBA messed up on that. ... That whole weirdness, awkwardness that it could be, that's out the window."

Haslem still refers to his former teammate as the best player in the world and downplays the Heat vs. LeBron notion. The teams have other issues - Miami is 13-16 and missing an injured Bosh, and Cleveland lost forward Anderson Varajao for the rest of the season when he went down with an Achilles' injury Tuesday night.

"It ain't about Bron," Haslem said. "It ain't about beating Cleveland because he left to go to Cleveland. It's about the Miami Heat against the Cleveland Cavaliers."

It's anyone's guess what crowd reaction awaits.

Some will boo. Some will cheer. Some may do both.

The Heat will honor James with an in-game video tribute, as they do with many returning players, and will have another for former Miami guard James Jones.

"I don't really get involved in what to expect," James said. "My job is to go down there and win a basketball game and live in the moment."

There was scorn when James left this past summer, of course. Some fans felt like James could have at least publicly thanked Heat fans who welcomed him in 2010, though it could also be argued that those fans getting to enjoy four consecutive trips to the NBA Finals were thanks enough.

But it was nothing like the venom that came from Cleveland when he left in 2010, and that's why whatever scene awaits James Thursday won't come remotely close to matching that avalanche of negativity when Miami visited the Cavaliers for the first time four years ago.

"He left an unbelievable legacy here," Wade said. "In four years he did what players haven't done in their whole career.

MLB average salary exceeds $3.8 million

NEW YORK (AP)—Major League Baseball's average salary shot up to more than $3.8 million this year following the steepest rise in more than a decade, putting big leaguers on track to top the $4 million barrier for the first time in 2015.

The Major League Baseball Players Association said Tuesday the average salary was $3,818,923, up from $3,386,212 last year. The 12.78 percent hike was the biggest since a 12.83 percent rise from 2000 to 2001.

Player salaries are spurting after several years of more modest gains. The increase is fueled by record revenue in the $9 billion range, much of it from national television contracts and club deals with regional sports networks.

The average topped $1 million for the first time in 1992, crossed the $2 million barrier in 2001 and the $3 million mark in 2010.

MLB's wages are a stark contrast to the economy at large. The average U.S. wage rose 1.3 percent in 2013 to $43,041, according to the Social Security Administration.

Figures are based on 910 players. The union has based its annual studies on rosters and disabled lists as of Aug. 31—the last day before active rosters expand from 25 per team to 40.

The commissioner's office, which uses slightly different methods, put its average at $3,726,243, an increase of 12 percent from last year's $3,326,645. MLB revised its figure Tuesday from an initial average of $3,692,123 it calculated last week.

The union did not release its annual averages for teams and positions.

Meanwhile, in St. Louis, reliever Jordan Walden and the St. Louis Cardinals have agreed to a $6.6 million, two-year contract that avoided salary arbitration.

The 27-year-old right-hander gets a $350,000 signing bonus and salaries of $2.5 million next year and $3.5 million in 2016 as part of Tuesday's deal. The Cardinals have a $5.25 million option for 2017 with a $250,000 buyout.

Walden was obtained by the Cardinals from Atlanta with outfielder Jason Heyward on Nov. 17 for pitchers Shelby Miller and Tyrell Jenkins. Walden made $1.49 million last season, when he was 0-2 with a 2.88 ERA and three saves as a setup man for closer Craig Kimbrel.

Walden has appeared in 50 or more games in three of the past four seasons and has a 12-13 career record with a 3.10 ERA, 38 saves and 254 strikeouts in 211 2-3 innings. He was an AL All-Star in 2011, when he had 32 saves for the Los Angeles Angels.

SIDEBAR

Kings' trade talks for Williams stalled

SACRAMENTO (AP)—The Kings' insistence on a trade package for Brooklyn Nets guard Deron Williams that includes center Mason Plumlee has pushed talks into a hiatus, league sources said.

After the teams' front office officials again talked on Wednesday, both sides insisted they weren't budging on Plumlee's inclusion into a proposed trade and agreed there was no use discussing the deal further in the near future, league sources said.

"Talks aren't dead, but nothing's going to happen with Plumlee involved," a league source told Yahoo Sports.

Circumstances and stances can always change, especially closer to the NBA trade deadline in February. For now, the Kings and Nets seem to be holding ground.

Sacramento point guard Darren Collison and forwards Derrick Williams and Jason Thompson were possibilities as part of a multi-player package for Deron Williams, league sources said.

The combination of Williams' massive salary and declining health and production leave the Nets with little leverage to take back much more than spare parts for the one-time All-Star guard.

Nevertheless, the Nets have an interest in unloading Williams' contract, but don't believe they'd have to attach a good young player or a draft pick to a deal.

The Kings have been pleased with Collison's impact on the roster, especially how he's emerged as a strong leader and a popular teammate. There remains a reluctance for Sacramento to move Collison in a deal, sources said, but the Nets would need a point guard to replace Williams and he'd be a solid starter at a reasonable price.

Kings interim coach Tyrone Corbin and Williams have a solid relationship dating back to their several years together with the Utah Jazz. After consecutive seasons of ankle injuries limiting his effectiveness, Williams has played better this season – if not nearly back to his past All-Star level.

Williams, 30, has two full years and $43 million-plus left on his contract through the end of the 2017 season. The Nets are motivated to shed salary and try to again reboot the franchise. Williams is averaging a career-low 15.6 points and 6.8 assists per game.

Manning intends to return for 18th season in 2015

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. (AP)—NFL fans and fantasy football owners debating Peyton Manning's prowess and problems can continue that discussion well into the new year.

The five-time MVP says he plans to return to the Denver Broncos in 2015 for an 18th NFL season.

Manning was asked during his weekly news conference Wednesday if there were a set of circumstances that would lead him to retire after the upcoming playoffs.

"I have not thought about those circumstances at all," Manning replied. "So, I certainly plan on being back, if the Broncos will have me. But at this point, I'm kind of thinking about Oakland."

A win over the Raiders (3-12) on Sunday would earn the Broncos (11-4) a first-round bye.

AP

Denver Broncos quarterback Peyton Manning leaves the field after their 24-17 win against the Buffalo Bills in an NFL football game Sunday, Dec. 7, 2014, in Denver.

Manning said he knows talk this time of year turns to the coaching carousel and "I get to fall into that category because maybe I'm closer to the same age as some of the coaches. But yeah, I have no plans along those lines. I'm enjoying playing and looking forward to Sunday's game and the game to follow that."

Manning, 38, is trying to supplant his boss, Broncos GM John Elway, as the oldest QB to win a Super Bowl.

But first, he's trying to bounce back from a poor performance in Denver's 37-28 loss Monday night at Cincinnati, where he threw four interceptions for the sixth time in his career.

Although the Broncos have down-shifted their high-octane offense over the past several weeks to work on a better ground game, Manning has thrown just five TD passes to go with six interceptions in the past month.

That's sparked a debate over whether time is finally catching up to Manning despite his posting a 39-12 record following spinal fusion surgery in 2011.

With every interception, the debate grows in both traditional and social media over his age, health and even his credentials.

"Yeah, that's probably a little deeper than I can handle," Manning said. "... But the ones the other night were a combination of bad throws and bad decisions. ... I take a lot of pride in trying to be an accurate quarterback and trying to be disciplined in my decision making. So, I didn't play up to my standards the other night and certainly on those four particular plays, I've got to do a better job.

"I'm not sure how old you are has (anything) to do with it. You can be 22 and throw a ball behind a guy, you're probably going to get intercepted."

Manning is in some ways a victim of his own greatness. In his first 43 regular-season games in a Broncos uniform, Manning averaged 27 completions per game for 318 yards. Over his past four, he's averaged 18 completions for 224 yards. His TD rate has fallen from 2.68 per game to 1.25, and his interception rate has more than doubled from .69 to 1.5.

Coach John Fox issued an impassioned defense of his quarterback this week, saying, "if you look at the meaningful statistics as it relates to quarterback, I think he's probably in the top five in the National Football League, which we're pleased with."

Manning leads the NFL with 39 TD passes and his 102.9 passer rating and 4,454 yards passing both rank fourth.

And he's done it despite Julius Thomas' six-week TD slump, Wes Welker's drastic drop in production and a jumbled O-line that's not given him enough time or space to step into his throws.

Although his teammates fully expected it, Manning's pronouncement Wednesday was met with glee.

"Eighteen's back, we're back!" running back C.J. Anderson said. "Naw, I just think he's got a lot to prove. I don't know if Peyton pays attention to that. But I just know if someone's talking bad about me almost every week, I would want to come back and show you guys wrong."

Cornerback Chris Harris Jr. said he anticipates Manning playing beyond 2015.

"I expect him to play out his whole deal," Harris said. "Even if we win the Super Bowl, I see Peyton coming back still because we would pretty much have everybody back."

Manning is due $19 million salaries in both 2015 and `16.

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Put3ska claims Fanihi title; Warriors keep bid in Flame Tree

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Sand Juvy Put3ska used its two wins in the partners double matches as enough cushion in completing an 8-4 decision against sister team No Fear in the final match in the Fanihi B division of the 2014 Saipan Electronic Darts Association Bud Light Cup last week.

The Put3ska pairs of Arvin Orense and Paul Quizon, and Renato Barros and Modie Zamora opened things up with victories over the opposing tandems of Claire Aldan and Phil Celis, and Francis Magofna and Hank Magofna.

Orense, Quizon, Zamora and Mike Badonadi followed it up with wins in the random cricket, partners double out, and half-it events, claiming 6 of the 10 matches at stake to seal the win for the Put3ska crew.

Put3ska eked out an 8-6 triumph over the Smoke Pub 80 Proofers, while the No Fear clipped the VFW Warriors, 8-4, in a pair of semifinals contests last Dec. 11.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The Jokers Warriors are in contention for the Flame Tree division title in the Bud Light Cup of the Saipan Electronic Darts Association.

Put3ska placed second behind the Smoke Pub D' Mekaniks in the regular season.

Results of the Naked Fish Ridin' Darrty and Jokers Warriors finals match in the Flame Tree B division were not yet available at press time.

The Smoke Pub Marupok clinched a semis seat after an 8-6 win over the D'Mekaniks in the Tuesday B Division. The finals is set for Dec. 30.

The Ridin' Darrty takes on the Route33 Mixblood, and Smoke Pub Comatose battles the Route33 Mafia in the A division semifinals with the winners advancing to the Dec. 29 title match.

The Darrty defeated the 101 Proofers, 9-5; Mixblood dumped Sakude, 9-3; and the Mafia and Hunters scored similar 9-6 decisions over the Bud Brothers and Comatose, respectively, in the quarterfinal round.

In the Chichirika division, the Jokers Spartans battle the Sand Juvy Ta Chagi for a spot on the Chichirika C division title match, while the Joe's DNA Jump It and the Smoke Pub Bull-It are in the other half of the semis match.

The Spartans tripped the Snipers, 8-2; Ta Chagi edged Feelin' Lucky, 8-6; Jump It clipped Hit'em Up, 8-4; and the Bull-It downed Blue Koi's, 8-5, in the Last 8 round with the Bud Light champion to be known on Jan. 14.

The awards ceremony is set for Jan. 25 from 10:30am to 2pm at Charley's Cabaret at Pacific Islands Club Saipan.

Saipan Soccer School hosts futsal tourney

Saipan Soccer School's 2014 Christmas Youth Futsal Tournament kicks off today with four games scheduled at the TSL Sports Complex.

Lil' Rascal and MP United U12 play in the curtain-raiser at 5pm. They are entered in the co-ed U12 division, joining Team Betde and Orange Rangers, who duel in the second match at 6pm.

In the girls U15, the Lady Blues takes on Girly Flowers and Rainbows at 7pm, while in the boys U15, Orange Rangers collide against Astig Futsal.

The two other teams entered the boys U15 are Real Crispy Pata and Matansa Blazers, which will have their first game tomorrow at 7:30pm. In the girls U15, Matansa Sparks and Orange Rangers complete the cast with the former debuting against Lady Blues at 5:30pm. The Orange Rangers will have its first game versus Girly Flowers and Rainbows in the third game at 6:30pm, while in the first match at 4:30pm, MPU faces Oranges Rangers in the U12 co-ed division.

Each division will have a double-round robin format in the elimination with the Top 2 teams advancing to the finals. ***(RBM)***

Weight not an issue for Pacquiao against Mayweather

Floyd Mayweather Jr. can choose the weight he wants and Manny Pacquiao won't object to it if only to make their megabuck bout happen next year.

Whether the fight will be at 147 pounds or 154, or at a catch weight, Pacquiao hardly cares, the Filipino icon's team said.

Trainer Freddie Roach said all the eight-division world champion wants is to get into the ring with the unbeaten American and find out who really is the better fighter.

This despite the Hall of Fame trainer's recent announcement that he is thinking of making Pacquiao slide to 140 pounds, where the Filipino icon's power will be more pronounced.

Pacquiao fought and beat Chris Algieri by a lopsided decision at a catch weight of 144 pounds, though it was for his World Boxing Organization welterweight (147) crown, on Nov. 23 in Macau.

Though Pacquiao knocked down Algieri six times, he was unable to finish off the New Yorker and score his first knockout since stopping Miguel Cotto in the 12th round in 2009.

"We'll (Pacquiao) fight Mayweather at whatever weight he wants to fight at," Roach told fightnews.com much earlier.

Since Mayweather has said that he will decide on all the terms (purse, revenue sharing, drug testing protocol, gloves, venue, date) if Pacquiao really wants to fight him on May 2, it's likely that he will seek a weight limit of 147 pounds up.

Mayweather is naturally bigger than Pacquiao, having weighed in at 150.5 pounds when he fought and beat Canelo Alvarez at a catch weight of 154 lb in 2013.

Pacquiao has not checked in at more than 147 pounds and weighed in at 143.8 lb when he beat Antonio Margarito at a catch weight of 150 pounds in 2010.

Another issue that could stifle negotiations is Mayweather's insistence that the fight be held on May 2, the weekend of Cinco de Mayo, which is a Mexican holiday.

Top Rank Promotions head Bob Arum believes that a Mexican or Mexicans should headline the fight card on that date. For Mayweather, however, there's little room for compromise. He's calling the shots.

Meanwhile, Chris Algieri doubts that the long-anticipated showdown between Pacquiao and will push through.

Algieri added that in the event Pacquiao and Mayweather can somehow come together in one night, the unbeaten American will triumph in a not so exciting affair.

TKEL

From Page 32

when he found Kevin Ogo free at the endzone for a 27-yard TD. Jose Camacho, after the first of Tkel's two TD runs, ran to complete the 2-point conversion.

Tkel, replacing Ada as quarterback in the third period, hit Matthew Kapileo with a 34-yard TD pass to increase the Lightning lead to 26-0.

Ada returned in the fourth and ended his stint with a 15-yard TD pass to Matthew Kapileo, who completed Eastern's scoring.

Tkel also spearheaded the Lightning defense with 13 tackles and one interception, while Ada and Gregorio Sablan had 5 each. The rest of the Eastern crew combined for 31 tackles.

The Lightning defense held the Thunder to a combined 127 yards in offense—30 in passing and 97 in rushing—compared to their 304 yards (147 passing and 157 rushing).

Tkel almost outrushed the entire Southern side. He finished with 106 total yards in rushing, while the Thunder's Franko Bondoc, Norman Cabrera, Brent Azarcon, and Scottson Suda combined for 110.

The Thunder dropped to 1-2 with the loss and they are hoping to close out with a win that would secure them the second spot when they face the winless Vikings tomorrow at 1pm also at the Airport Field.

The Lightning will wrap up their season against the Vikings on Jan. 3. The championship will be played on Jan. 10.

TSUNAMI

From Page 32

200m, and 400m freestyle, 50m and 100m backstroke, 50m butterfly, and 200m individual medley. Tenorio and Batallones also had eight events each with the former joining the boys 9 to 10's 50m, 100m, and 200m freestyle, 50m, 100, and 200m backstroke, 100m breaststroke, and 200m IM. In the boys 11 to 12 age group, Batallones will swim in the 50m, 100m, 200m, and 400m freestyle, 50m butterfly, 50m and 100m backstroke, and 200m IM.

The two other members of the team will have six events apiece. Aleksenko and Suzuki are both entered in the U8 division's 50m, 100, and 200m freestyle, 50m breaststroke, 50m backstroke, and 50m butterfly races.

Tsunami Saipan head coach Hiro Kimura said they set a high goal for the five swimmers competing in the Guam meet.

"For this meet, we are targeting high point awards in each age group. It means everyone should win medals," Kimura said.

The coach said Suzuki, Aleksenko, Tenorio and De Jesus are aiming for the first place finish in the high-point race in their respective age groups, while Batallones is looking at making it to the Top 3.

"They are also targeting at updating their personal best times. I believe they can do it," Kimura said.

Twenty events are scheduled in the Saturday and Sunday competition with 7 of them to take place in the afternoon, starting at 4:45pm. The Sunday competition will have two sessions with the morning session holding 7 more events, beginning at 8:15am and the remaining 6 slated in the afternoon, starting at 2:15pm.

This weekend's meet will be Aleksenko and Suzuki's second straight appearance in the year-ending tournament in Guam as they were also part of Tsunami Saipan's eight-swimmer team last year, joining Hans Xu, Anthony Deleon Guerrero-Camacho, Arman Rechucher, Nanaka Watanabe, Natsuki Nagata, and Ashley Dangol in the 2013-2014 GSF Short Course Championships.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Angel De Jesus smiles to the camera after completing her training.

FIESTA

From Page 32

ures. Janelle Francisco led Fiesta with her 21 points, while Friendly Joy Pena chipped in 15, and Lian Reyes and Martina Ada contributed 11 and 10, respectively.

Kyla Ito had a game-high 32 points, but was the only double figure scorer for IT&E, which fell to a 0-2 record, as it also bowed to Armatech last Monday.

Armatech's 54-29 rout of IT&E was a fitting follow-up of their 43-27 domination of Shirley's Coffee Shop last Saturday.

Rachel Abrams and Chevy Kate Alipio teamed up in towing Armatech to victory, as they combined for more than half of the squad's total output. Abrams had a game-high 17 points, while Alipio added 13.

Abrams fired 12 of her total points in the first period, lifting Armatech to a 24-11 halftime lead. The division co-leader kept its safe distance in the second quarter, as Alipio took over from Abrams, dropping 10 markers in the final frame.

Meanwhile, in the second game last Saturday, Kanoa Resort edged Sun Palace, 23-21.

Negahr Rastguiy top-scored for Kanoa with her 9 points, but it was Kelsey Lizama who hit the crucial baskets for the team, as she registered their last 4 points.

The game against Sun Palace was Kanoa's first and the latter will play its second game tomorrow against IT&E at 8pm. Sun Palace, which has a 0-2 card, will go for win No. 1 versus Shirley's at 7pm, while Armatech and Fiesta dispute the solo lead at 5:30pm.

First Game

Fiesta 65–Francisco 21, Pena 15, Reyes 11, Ada 10, Garon 4, Lee 2.

IT&E 53–Ito 32, Williams 8, Alegre 6, Atalig 5, Villagomez 3.

Scoring by halves: 36-27, 65-53.

Second Game

Kanoa 23–T. Santos 7, Lizama 4, Jones 4, Muna 2, Agulto 2, Iriarte 2, Cabrera 2.

Sun Palace 21–Abadilla 8, Avelino 5, Lumabi 4, Cardinio 2, Olivos 2.

Scoring by halves: 11-8, 23-21.

Third Game

Armatech 43–Abrams 17, Alipio 13, Castillo 7, Pagarao 4, Pangilinan 2.

Shirley's 27–Rastguiy 9, Pablo 6, Ito 5, Castillo 3, Vergara 2, Phan 2.

Scoring by halves: 24-11, 43-27.

8th Traders Insurance Badminton Team Tournament

PHOTOS By JON PEREZ

SBC member Rowena Sison prepares to defend in her and teammate Yun Jun Lee's mixed B match against Aries Cordero and Windy Fernandez of Shirley's.

Saipan Badminton Club president Glen Buultjens, fourth right, celebrate with his members after receiving the championship trophy, the team's fourth straight, in the awards ceremony of the 8th Traders Insurance Badminton Team Tournament last Sunday at Kanoa Resort's Seaside Hall.

Yun Jun Lee tries to drive the shuttle.

Golden Racquets Badminton Club players get the third place trophy in the annual team tournament.

Shirley's Badminton Club head Aries Cordero, with trophy, joins his members for a group photo after placing second to SBC.

SBC's Oh Im Bog, left, and Hancheol Yu chase the shuttle.

Far left, Traders Insurance president Lito Mendoza, left, thanks everyone who competed in the tournament, while his wife, Malou, listens.

Windy Fernandez, left, gets ready to serve, while doubles partner Aries Cordero waits for the return.

LeBron set for Christmas homecoming against Heat

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Manning intends to return for 18th season in 2015

PAGE 29

Tkel, Lightning stay unbeaten

JON PEREZ

An Eastern Lightning player tries to prevent his opponent from the Southern Thunder from gaining more yards in their game in the Commonwealth Football League Association 2014 Youth League last Saturday at the CPA Airport Field.

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The Eastern Lightning could be on their way to completing another undefeated season after cruising to a 32-0 shutout win over the Southern Thunder in the Commonwealth Football League Association 2014 Youth League last Saturday at the CPA Airport Field.

The Dave Ada-mentored squad, with Zander Tkel playing at both ends of the field, remained undefeated after three games. The Lightning also beat the Thunder, 40-20, in their first meeting and downed the Northern Vikings, 46-12, last Dec. 13, for their flawless record.

The Lightning, in their second meeting with the Thunder, dominated their opponents the entire match with Tkel playing both in defense and offense.

Tkel rushed for 106 yards, sparking the Lightning offense with 2 touchdowns and a pair of 16-yard TD runs that helped his team establish a 20-0 lead at the break.

Donavin Ada opened the scoring for the Eastern side

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5 Tsunami Saipan bets to compete in Guam

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Four more Tsunami Saipan swimmers leave Saipan today to compete in the 2014 Guam International Meet at the Hagatna Swimming Pool this weekend.

The club's senior member Angel De Jesus, who is already in Guam, will lead Tsunami Saipan's small delegation and will be joined by young swimmers Kana Suzuki, Isaiah Aleksenko, Juhn Tenorio, and Nelson Batallones.

De Jesus will race in eight events in the girls 15 to 16 age group—the 50m, 100m,

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Juhn Tenorio, Isaiah Aleksenko, Nelson Batallones, and Kana Suzuki of Tsunami Saipan pose for a photo during a break in their training session at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool. The four Tsunami Saipan swimmers leave Saipan today to join Angel De Jesus in Guam for a weekend meet.

Fiesta Resort, Armatech share lead

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan and Armatech are in tie for the early lead in the women's division of the 2014 Tan Holdings Basketball Classic.

Fiesta gained its second win in as many games in the six-team field after outclassing IT&E in the first game of last Saturday's women's division triple-header at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium. Fiesta earlier won its debut during the league's opener last Dec. 19 after downing Sun Palace Hotel, 40-30.

Against IT&E, Fiesta also went home with a twin-digit margin as four of the latter's players broke into double fig-

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Female players recite the oath of sportsmanship during the opening ceremony of the 2014 Tan Holdings Basketball Classic last Friday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.